



Research on the Value Foundation and Transmission Path of the Concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind in Pakistan

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Abstract: This paper delves deep into the value foundation and practical path of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind in Pakistan. By integrating cross-cultural communication theory, this paper proposes the construction of a “multi-level, multi-subject” communication network, aiming to provide valuable reference for the regionalization practice of international concepts. Extensive research has revealed that the dissemination of this concept in Pakistan is firmly anchored in the political mutual trust stemming from the all-weather strategic partnership between China and Pakistan, the economic cooperation ties forged by the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and the interactive foundation between Islamic civilization and traditional Chinese culture. The transmission path in this paper encompasses a wide array of multidimensional channels, including educational cooperation, media narrative, public diplomacy, and digital platforms. Through in-depth analysis, the author shows that the CPEC project not only drives infrastructure development but also significantly deepens the recognition of the “common interest view” among the Pakistani people through rich cultural exchanges. Nevertheless, the cognitive barriers caused by Western influence and cultural differences in private media remain formidable challenges.

Keywords: Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, Pakistan, Cross-cultural communication, China Pakistan Economic Corridor

Introduction

Since President Xi Jinping put forward the concept of a “community with a shared future for mankind” in 2013 as the core proposition of China’s participation in global governance, it has gradually gained widespread recognition and formed a broad consensus in multilateral diplomatic arenas. This concept represents a new vision for international relations, emphasizing cooperation, mutual benefit, and common development among countries, transcending traditional geopolitical rivalries.

Pakistan, as China’s “all-weather strategic partner,” holds a unique and crucial position in the context of this concept. The long-standing and profound relationship between the two countries makes Pakistan not only a key area for the practical implementation of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind but also a typical case for observing how developing countries accept and integrate international ideas. Currently, China-Pakistan relations have evolved far beyond traditional geopolitical cooperation. They have expanded and deepened into various fields such as cultural exchange, people-to-people connectivity, and economic and trade cooperation, presenting a comprehensive and multi-dimensional partnership.

However, existing research in this field mainly focuses on the theoretical interpretation of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind or the macro-level impact of economic corridors. There is a lack of in-depth micro-analysis of how Pakistani society accepts and understands this concept. This gap in research leaves many questions unanswered, such as how the local cultural and social environment in Pakistan influences the dissemination of the concept, and what are the specific mechanisms through which different social groups in Pakistan perceive and respond to it.

This article aims to fill this research gap by combining cross-cultural communication theory with empirical facts. By systematically deconstructing the value foundation and communication path of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind in Pakistan, it seeks to provide strategic insights for the regional dissemination of international ideas. Specifically, the study aims to explore the applicability of cross-cultural communication theory in the context of developing countries. Developing countries often have unique cultural, social, and political backgrounds, and understanding how international concepts can be effectively communicated and accepted in such contexts is of great theoretical and practical significance.

In addition, this research intends to supplement the existing literature on the acceptance mechanism of “non-Western subjects.” Most of the current research on international concepts is based on Western-centric perspectives, and there is a lack of in-depth exploration of how non-Western countries and regions understand and internalize these concepts. At the same time, this study will provide practical suggestions for optimizing the communication strategies of China-Pakistan cooperation. By improving communication effectiveness, it can help enhance the soft power of Chinese ideas in the Islamic cultural circle. Moreover, the experience and models summarized from this study can provide valuable references



for the people-to-people projects of countries along the “the Belt and Road,” promoting more extensive and in-depth international cooperation.

Literature Review

The academic community has conducted extensive research on the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, and it is generally believed that this concept encompasses four core dimensions: the view of common interests, which breaks away from the zero-sum game model and advocates for win-win cooperation among countries; the view of international power, emphasizing equal consultation and joint decision-making in international affairs; the view of sustainable development, giving priority to ecological protection and promoting harmonious coexistence between humans and nature; and the view of global governance, encouraging diverse subject participation to jointly address global challenges.

Liu Tongfang (2023) pointed out that the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind aims to reconstruct the international order and promote the establishment of a new type of international relations. It achieves this through the “Five in One” strategy, which covers politics, security, economy, culture, and ecology. This comprehensive strategy provides a systematic framework for countries to cooperate and develop together.

However, a CiteSpace analysis of relevant research shows that although there is a large amount of research on global governance and China’s solutions, research on the cognitive mechanisms of developing countries regarding the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind is relatively insufficient. For example, Wang Chen (2024) emphasized the universality of the concept, highlighting its potential to benefit all countries in the world. However, this research did not delve into the specific impact of Islamic culture, which plays a dominant role in Pakistan, on the acceptance of this concept. This omission means that we lack a comprehensive understanding of how the concept is received and interpreted in the context of Islamic cultural values.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan 73 years ago, the two countries have built a deep-seated mutual trust through various forms of cooperation. High-level visits have continuously strengthened political communication and strategic coordination, economic corridor construction has promoted mutual economic development and benefit sharing, and anti-terrorism cooperation has jointly safeguarded regional peace and stability.

As a flagship project of the “Belt and Road Initiative,” the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has brought far-reaching impacts to Pakistan. It not only effectively addresses Pakistan’s electricity shortage problem-as of 2023, CPEC energy projects contribute 30% of Pakistan’s total electricity generation-but also promotes cultural integration through educational cooperation and film and television exchanges. For example, the establishment of Confucius Institutes in Pakistan provides a platform for Pakistani people to learn Chinese language and culture, and film and television works such as “A Pakistani Girl” enhance mutual understanding and cultural exchanges between the two countries. However, Jin Qiang et al. (2022) found through research that Pakistani media reports on China are still mainly focused on economic issues, with social and cultural issues accounting for less than 4%. Moreover, private media in Pakistan are often influenced by Western narratives. For instance, in a 2021 report on Xinjiang issues by Dawn, 52% of the quotations came from Associated Press and Reuters, which reflects the problem of source dependence and the potential for misinformation dissemination.

Hall’s “high-low context” theory and Hofstede’s cultural dimensions model provide important theoretical tools for analyzing cultural differences. These theories suggest that when disseminating ideas across cultures, it is necessary to balance the adaptation of the symbolic system, such as language teaching, and the resonance of values. For example, the concept of “common security” in the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind has a certain fit with the Islamic concept of “umma,” which emphasizes the unity and security of the Islamic community. There is also a philosophical similarity between the Chinese cultural principle of “harmony in diversity,” which advocates for the coexistence and mutual respect of different cultures, and the Islamic principle of “seeking common ground while reserving differences” (Ahmed, 2020).

The theory of cognitive community emphasizes the important bridging role of intellectual elites in the internalization of ideas. Pakistani scholar Hassan (2023) pointed out that the China-Pakistan Studies Center established at the University of Punjab has successfully integrated the concept of “community of shared destiny” with the local discourse of “national unity” (Qaumi Ittehad) through academic seminars. This integration shows how intellectual elites can play a key role in making international concepts more acceptable and relevant to the local context.

Value Foundation: Feasibility Analysis of Concept Communication:

(i) Political mutual trust: strategic support for all-weather partnership

The China-Pakistan relationship has withstood the test of time over the past 73 years, evolving into a partnership that is described as “higher than mountains and deeper than seas.” This long-term and stable relationship is not only based on geopolitical considerations but also on a deep-seated mutual understanding and trust. The 2024 China-Pakistan Joint Declaration clearly prioritizes the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind, which provides a solid institutional guarantee for the dissemination of this concept in Pakistan. This declaration reflects the common will of the two countries to further strengthen cooperation and jointly promote the realization of this important concept.

In addition, the two countries have shown strong mutual support in multilateral occasions such as the United Nations. Pakistan has continuously and firmly supported China on issues related to Xinjiang and Taiwan for 12 consecutive years. This mutual support not only reflects the strategic significance of the bilateral relationship but also helps to consolidate the political mutual trust between the two countries. In the international arena, such mutual support demonstrates the

solidarity and cooperation between China and Pakistan, which in turn provides a favorable political environment for the dissemination of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. The high-level political trust makes it easier for the two countries to reach consensus on various issues related to the concept, and promotes the implementation of relevant cooperation projects.

(ii) Economic Bond: The Benefit Sharing Mechanism of CPEC

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has had a profound impact on Pakistan's economic development and social progress. Through a series of energy and transportation projects, CPEC has created approximately 230,000 jobs, directly benefiting a large number of local people. These jobs not only improve the income and living standards of Pakistani workers but also enhance their sense of participation and identification in the development process.

Projects such as the Gwadar Port and Lahore Orange Line Metro have had a significant impact on Pakistan's infrastructure construction and economic development. The Gwadar Port, as a key node of CPEC, has seen a remarkable increase in cargo throughput, growing from 54,000 tons in 2015 to 1.5 million tons in 2023. This growth not only promotes Pakistan's trade development but also strengthens its connection with the international market. The Lahore Orange Line Metro has improved the local transportation situation, facilitating people's daily travel and promoting urban economic development.

According to the 2023 report from the Ministry of Planning and Development of Pakistan, the first phase of CPEC (2015-2022) effectively drove Pakistan's GDP growth. Economic cooperation under CPEC has given rise to a "community of interests," providing a solid material foundation for the dissemination of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. For example, the Sahiwar Coal-fired Power Plant not only alleviated Pakistan's electricity crisis but also trained more than 2,000 local engineers through technology transfer. This technology transfer not only helps Pakistan improve its energy production capacity but also forms a bidirectional cycle of "development dividends" and "ideological recognition." The local people can directly experience the benefits brought by CPEC projects, which makes them more likely to accept and support the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind.

(iii) Mutual Appreciation of Civilizations: The Tradition of Dialogue between Islamic and Chinese Cultures

Historically, the Silk Road has played an important role in promoting the exchange and integration of Chinese and Islamic cultures. It facilitated the bidirectional dissemination of Buddhist art and papermaking techniques, which not only enriched the cultural connotations of both sides but also laid the foundation for cultural exchanges. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, scholars such as Wang Daiyu actively integrated Confucian "benevolence" with Islamic "umma" concepts. This cultural integration shows that Chinese and Islamic cultures have the potential for in-depth dialogue and mutual learning, which provides a historical and cultural basis for the current dissemination of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind.

In contemporary times, the "Guardians of Gandhara" project and the China-Pakistan Cultural Salon continue to carry forward this tradition of cultural dialogue, strengthening the value identification between the two countries. For example, in 2023, the special exhibition "Silk Road Treasures" jointly organized by the Palace Museum and the Lahore Museum attracted 120,000 visitors. The juxtaposition of the Chinese translation of the Quran and Zheng He's navigation map in the exhibition visually presented the historical trajectory of cultural integration between China and Islamic countries, helping the audience better understand the long-standing friendly exchanges between the two cultures.

Furthermore, in his novel "The Starlight of Karakoram," Pakistani author Jamil (2022) combines the story of Chinese and Pakistani engineers collaborating on road construction with the metaphor of a "community of shared destiny." This literary work not only reflects the practical cooperation between the two countries but also vividly interprets the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind from a cultural perspective. It shows that the concept can be integrated into local cultural works and spread among the people in a more accessible and appealing way.

Communication Pathways: Practical Strategies for Multi-dimensional Channels

(i) Educational Cooperation: Cultivating Knowledge Elites and Youth Groups

Currently, there are five Confucius Institutes in Pakistan, and the number of Chinese learners in the Gilgit-Baltistan region has witnessed a remarkable surge. These Confucius Institutes play a crucial role in promoting the understanding of Chinese language and culture among Pakistani people. Language education is not only about teaching words and grammar but also about promoting the understanding of cultural symbols. For example, when translating the term "Community of Shared Future" into Urdu (Qaumi Mukammal Mushtarqa Muashi), it is necessary to take into account local semantics to ensure that the concept can be accurately understood.

In 2023, the Confucius Institute Islamabad developed a textbook titled "Comparison of Chinese and Pakistani Cultures." This textbook includes modules such as "Teahouse Conversations" and "Wedding Customs," which help reduce cultural misunderstandings by introducing the similarities and differences between the two cultures in a vivid and practical way. Through language learning and cultural understanding, Pakistani students can have a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of China, which is conducive to the dissemination of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind.

The University Alliance of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor promotes joint research between universities in the two countries. This cooperation not only enhances academic exchanges but also helps to localize relevant theories. For example, the media research collaboration between Tsinghua University and Punjab University has made important contributions to the dissemination of the concept. In 2024, the two universities jointly released the "CPEC Social Impact

Assessment Report.” By using local Pakistani data, this report demonstrates the contribution of the “Shared Interests View” to poverty reduction in Pakistan. This kind of research based on local data and actual situations can make the concept more persuasive and acceptable to the Pakistani academic community and the general public, and also promotes the integration of the concept with local academic research.

(ii) Media Narration: Building a “Neutral-Positive” Discourse System

Official media cooperation between China and Pakistan is an important part of building a positive discourse system. The Associated Press (AP) and China Global Television Network (CGTN) have jointly produced and broadcast documentaries, such as “Light of the Corridor.” This documentary follows and films ordinary citizens like Gwadar fishermen and Lahore subway drivers, using the “narratives of ordinary people” to enhance emotional resonance. When the documentary was broadcast on Pakistan Television (PTV), according to Nielsen data, it achieved a high rating. This shows that through the stories of ordinary people, the documentary can effectively convey the positive impact of China-Pakistan cooperation and the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, and arouse the audience’s emotional identification.

To reduce the interference from Western narratives, China provides high-quality video materials and co-produces films and TV series with Pakistani private media. For instance, in 2023, CGTN provided Geo TV, a private channel in Pakistan, with high-definition materials of “Xinjiang Anti-Terrorism Documentary” free of charge. As a result, the proportion of neutrality in Geo TV’s Xinjiang-related reports increased from an initial level to 61%. This shows that by providing objective and accurate information, it is possible to guide private media in Pakistan to present a more comprehensive and objective view of China, and reduce the negative impact of Western misinformation on the Pakistani public’s perception of China.

Social media has become an important platform for information dissemination. TikTok, which has over 39 million users in Pakistan, can be used to launch Urdu short videos to disseminate development concepts through the “CPEC Story.” For example, the Chinese enterprise “China Road and Bridge Corporation” has released the “My Orange Line Metro Diary” series on TikTok. A single video in this series has garnered over 5 million views, and the comment section hashtag “Pakistan-China Dosti Zindabad” (Long Live Pakistan-China Friendship) has become a trending topic. This shows that social media can effectively spread the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind in a more popular and engaging way, reaching a wide range of Pakistani users and promoting people-to-people understanding and friendship.

The Islamabad Strategic Studies Institute (ISSI) and the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) jointly release research reports to enhance the academic influence of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. For example, the concept of a “digital community of shared future” proposed in the 2024 “China-Pakistan White Paper on Digital Economy Cooperation” was cited on the front page of Pakistan’s Daily Times. Through think tank cooperation, the concept can be promoted at the academic level, influencing the decision-making and thinking of policymakers and intellectuals in Pakistan, and further promoting its acceptance and implementation.

(iii) Public Diplomacy: Civil Interaction and Symbolic Practice

Cultural festivals serve as important platforms for promoting cultural exchange and friendship. The Spring Festival celebration in Pakistan has been adapted to incorporate local Pakistani art, creating a unique cultural blend. The Lahore’s “China Pakistan Friendship Wall” has become a landmark symbol, representing the close relationship between the two countries.

In 2024, the Lahore Spring Festival Temple Fair was a huge success, attracting 80,000 people to participate. The fair featured a variety of cultural activities, including traditional Chinese performances, handicraft exhibitions, and food stalls. Pakistani craftsmen designed paper cuttings themed “Kylin and Camel”, which symbolize the integration of the two civilizations. The Kylin, a mythical creature in Chinese culture, represents auspiciousness and nobility, while the camel is an important symbol in Pakistani culture, representing endurance and resilience. The combination of these two symbols in the paper cuttings vividly reflects the harmonious coexistence and mutual appreciation of the two cultures.

Chinese enterprises in Pakistan have actively participated in livelihood projects, which have a significant impact on shaping China’s image as a “responsible country” and enhancing the affinity of ideas. For example, the solar-powered drinking water project assisted by China Three Gorges Corporation in the Kohat area is a remarkable initiative. This project solved the drinking water problem for 50,000 villagers, providing them with clean and sustainable water sources.

The project was highly praised by the Pakistani media, which dubbed it the “modern version of the Karez Well”. The Karez Well is an ancient irrigation system in Pakistan, and comparing the solar-powered drinking water project to it not only shows the importance of the project but also emphasizes the similarity between Chinese and Pakistani efforts in improving people’s living standards. Such livelihood projects not only meet the practical needs of the local people but also build a strong emotional connection between the two countries.

Digital Platform: Building the “Digital Silk Road”

(i) Digital Content Sharing

The collaboration between Huawei and Pakistan Telecom in laying fiber optic cables is a key step in building the “Digital Silk Road”. This infrastructure development supports cross-border access to cultural resources such as “Digital Dunhuang”. The “Digital Dunhuang” project digitizes the precious cultural heritage of Dunhuang, making it accessible to people around the world.

In 2023, Pakistani users showed a great interest in the “Digital Dunhuang” content. They watched over 2 million live broadcasts of Dunhuang murals on the Huawei Cloud platform. The comment section of these live broadcasts was filled with positive feedback, and high-frequency words such as “shared cultural heritage between China and Pakistan”

appeared. This indicates that digital content sharing not only promotes cultural exchange but also helps to build a sense of shared cultural identity between the two countries.

(ii) Challenges and Suggestions

Cultural cognitive differences pose a significant challenge to communication between China and Pakistan. Pakistani society has certain conservative elements, which may sometimes conflict with "non-Islamic" values. In 2023, there was an incident where Pakistani social media mistakenly claimed that "Confucius Institutes promote atheism". This misinformation led to some parents in Punjab province boycotting Chinese language courses, despite subsequent clarification.

This incident reflects the need to be more sensitive to cultural differences and to adopt more effective communication strategies. It is important to understand the cultural background and values of the Pakistani audience and to present information in a way that respects and accommodates these differences.

Another major challenge is the reliance of Pakistani private media on Western sources for China-related reports. Many private media often reprint reports from European and American media, which can easily lead to misunderstandings. For example, in a 2022 report by The News on the debt issue between China and Pakistan, the data was sourced from the American think tank CSIS, neglecting the debt sustainability analysis issued by the Pakistani Ministry of Finance.

This one-sided reporting can distort the facts and mislead the public. It is necessary to encourage Pakistani media to conduct independent research and reporting, and to provide them with more accurate and objective information sources.

(iii) Optimization Suggestions

Stratified Communication Strategy

To address the challenges, a stratified communication strategy should be implemented. For elite groups, such as Pakistani scholars, policymakers, and business leaders, the "Global Governance Perspective" should be emphasized. Inviting Pakistani scholars to participate in international events like the G20 Think Tank Summit can provide them with a broader perspective and enhance their understanding of China's role in global governance.

For the general public, the focus should be on "Common Development" cases. Producing documentaries about CPEC workers, for example, can show how the CPEC is benefiting ordinary people in Pakistan. These documentaries can tell the stories of workers who have found employment, improved their living standards, and contributed to the development of their communities through the CPEC projects.

(iv) Localized Narrative

Localized narrative is essential for effective communication. Inviting Pakistani scholars to participate in conceptual interpretation can help make the communication more relevant and acceptable. For example, Punjab University offering a course on "China Pakistan Community of Shared Future" and collaborating with public institution managers on the Islamic doctrine of "Ukhuwah" (brotherhood) can bridge the cultural gap.

By integrating local cultural and religious concepts into the interpretation of bilateral relations, the ideas can be better understood and accepted by the Pakistani public. This approach also shows respect for local culture and values, enhancing the effectiveness of communication.

(v) Third-party Cooperation

Third-party cooperation can help reduce the perception of "China exporting" ideas. Jointly organizing forums with the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) can be a viable strategy. For example, in 2025, it is planned to hold the "Sino-Arab-Pakistani Civilization Dialogue" in Saudi Arabia, chaired by the Secretary-General of the OIC.

This dialogue can provide a platform for in-depth discussions on cultural exchange, cooperation, and common development. By involving third parties, the ideas and concepts can be presented in a more neutral and legitimate manner, enhancing their acceptance and influence in the international community.

In conclusion, the multi-dimensional communication pathways between China and Pakistan have made significant progress in educational cooperation, media narration, public diplomacy, and digital platforms. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed. By implementing the proposed optimization suggestions, these communication channels can be further strengthened, promoting deeper mutual understanding, cooperation, and development between the two countries.

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