



Research on Effective Ways to Promote the Dissemination of Chinese Culture among Pakistani Students Studying in Chinese Universities

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Abstract: This study aims to systematically explore how to construct and implement an effective path for the dissemination of Chinese culture within Chinese universities, particularly targeting the specific group of Pakistani international students. Despite the increasingly close strategic cooperation between China and Pakistan, there are still some practical issues in deep humanistic exchanges, especially in the dissemination of culture to Pakistani students in China, such as one-way communication mode, insufficient adaptation of content to the audience, and lack of effect evaluation. This study adopts a problem-oriented methodology to construct research, aiming to bridge the gap between macro-level cultural initiatives and micro-level educational practices. By comprehensively utilizing literature analysis, cross-cultural communication theory, and educational practice observation, this study proposes a comprehensive path framework centered on "mutual adaptation" and "systemic embedding." This framework emphasizes that effective cultural dissemination must shift from isolated, symbolic activities to an interactive cultural practice ecosystem deeply embedded in the entire academic and life processes of universities. This study constructs a systematic path comprising four pillars: "academic curriculum cultural immersion," "integration into campus life experience," "digital platform interactive co-creation," and "peer network interpersonal support," and elaborates on the specific implementation strategies, potential challenges, and coordination mechanisms for each path. The conclusion of this paper is that only through this systematic, interactive, and sustainable methodological innovation can cultural dissemination be internalized into the positive cognition and emotional identification of Pakistani students, thereby truly serving the strategic goal of "humanistic connectivity" between China and Pakistan and laying a solid social and humanistic foundation for inter-generational friendship between the two countries.

Keywords: Pakistani international students; Dissemination of Chinese culture; Cross-cultural adaptation; Internationalization of higher education; Dissemination pathways

Introduction

The all-weather strategic partnership between China and Pakistan has become a unique model in contemporary international relations. Under the grand blueprint of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has vigorously promoted practical cooperation. However, compared with the rapidly developing hard power cooperation, there are still significant "shortcomings" in cultural exchanges, especially in terms of deep level two-way cultural understanding. This lag may lead to the public, especially the younger generation, having only a superficial understanding of each other.

Against the backdrop of accelerated internationalization of higher education in China, an increasing number of Pakistani students are choosing to study in China. As direct observers of contemporary China, the experiences and perceptions formed by these students in Chinese universities will affect their impression of China in Pakistani society after returning to their home country. Therefore, cultivating Pakistani students as "cultural ambassadors" has strategic significance. How to go beyond superficial "cultural display" and build a deep, systematic, and effective communication path is an urgent problem to be solved.

Existing research has explored this topic from macro policies, institutional cases (such as Confucius Institutes), and media perspectives. However, an obvious gap lies in the lack of attention to the micro environment of "Chinese university campuses" and the audience of "Pakistani international students" themselves. There is still a lack of systematic guidance on "how to communicate", "how to implement", and "how to coordinate".

Therefore, this article conducted an applied research with a focus on "methodological construction". It aims to design an actionable path for the following specific dilemma: "How to effectively disseminate Chinese culture to Pakistani students in Chinese universities." This study constructs an analytical framework based on cross-cultural communication and learning theory, integrating dispersed activities into a sustainable cultural practice system embedded in higher education. This article first reviews relevant research; Then the core theoretical viewpoints were elaborated; Subsequently, an integrated framework consisting of four core paths was constructed; Finally, system support and future directions were discussed. The core research question is: How can we construct a systematic, actionable, and audience centered integrated path framework in Chinese universities to promote the effective dissemination and in-depth understanding of Chinese culture among Pakistani students?



Literature Review

Research on the external dissemination of Chinese culture and Sino-Pakistani cultural exchanges has amassed a substantial body of literature. Existing research can be broadly summarized into the following threads:

Firstly, studies on the macro strategy and significance of Sino-Pakistani cultural and educational cooperation. Scholars such as Bai Gui and Muhammad Arif (2015) traced efforts to strengthen bilateral cultural communication through government initiatives and new media. Muhammad Asif Noor (2023) further highlighted higher education and cultural tourism as potential areas for enhancing people-to-people exchanges. While providing strategic direction, this research often remains at the policy level, lacking a micro perspective on implementation within educational institutions.

Secondly, analysis of specific cultural communication carriers or institutional cases. For example, Zhang Jingwu and Muhammed Yaqoob (2023), through a case study of Chinese documentaries in Pakistan, critiqued over-reliance on governmental subjects, a self-centered communication attitude, and weak cultural adaptability leading to “cultural discount.” Conversely, studies on the Confucius Institute at the University of Punjab (Zu Jie & Qiu Xiaohong, 2021) or a Pakistan Research Center in Inner Mongolia (Jiang Xue et al., 2023) summarized practical experiences. These cases offer valuable insights but often focus on describing activities rather than analyzing replicable mechanisms.

Thirdly, discussions on the integration of culture into higher education and foreign language teaching. Lu Wenyuan (2024) demonstrated paths for integrating traditional Chinese culture into English teaching in vocational colleges. Historical and regional studies, such as those by Liu Qian (2016) and Cai Furao & Cao Bo (2018), provide important context on the long-term nature of cross-cultural communication.

Upon review, this study identifies three core gaps: First, the transition gap from macro policy to micro-level implementation within universities. Second, the perspective imbalance, often favoring the “supply-side” (communicators) over the “audience-side” (Pakistani students’ needs and reception). Third, the lack of integration, treating cultural communication as discrete activities rather than a synergistic ecosystem.

This study aims to address these gaps by constructing a systematic, audience-centered framework for cultural dissemination within the specific context of Chinese universities.

Theoretical Basis: A Perspective from Intercultural Communication and Adaptation:

This study's pathway design is rooted in three interrelated theoretical perspectives, and their application is crucial for guiding practice.

(i) Intercultural Adaptation Theory

This theory suggests that individuals entering a new culture will undergo a dynamic adjustment process. Berry's cultural adaptation strategy model is particularly important. The ideal outcome for Pakistani students in China is 'integration', where they actively learn and participate in Chinese culture while maintaining their cultural identity. Therefore, communication work must create a supportive environment that respects their original identity and reduces anxiety, rather than forcing assimilation. For example, activities should be seen as opportunities for mutual communication rather than one-way guidance. The practical application of this theory includes clearly verifying the initial cultural orientation plan of students' family culture, and gradually introducing optional Chinese cultural activities, allowing students to choose their level of participation without pressure - this is the key to promoting integration rather than separation or marginalization.

(ii) Constructivist Learning Theory

This theory emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by learners through experience and social interaction. Applied to cultural dissemination, this means that Pakistani students' understanding of Chinese culture should be established through their own participation, reflection, and dialogue, rather than passive acceptance. Therefore, the design of communication channels must prioritize experiential and interactive methods. Project based learning, collaborative tasks, and reflective discussions have become important tools for promoting personal meaning building. For example, the constructivist approach will include a workshop instead of lectures on Chinese tea culture, where students personally prepare different teas, discuss sensory experiences and social rituals in groups, and then compare these practices with Pakistan's beverage traditions. This 'learning while doing' approach can lead to deeper levels of cognitive and emotional processing.

(iii) The concepts of "cultural translation" and "shared meaning space" in communication

Cross cultural communication involves the exchange of implicit meanings within specific cultural codes. Hall's high context and low context cultural theories highlight this challenge. As a high context culture, Chinese culture requires "cultural translators" to explain implicit norms and historical backgrounds to students from different contexts such as Pakistan. The goal is to expand the 'shared meaning space'. This requires identifying the 'cultural interface' - commonalities in values, experiences, or interests - as a starting point for deeper engagement, such as comparing family values or educational aspirations. In practice, this means training teachers and Chinese student volunteers to serve as these translators. When explaining the concept of "relationship", they should not only define it as "network", but should place it in the context of Chinese social history and family structure, perhaps comparing it with similar but different social connection concepts in Pakistani society, in order to establish a bridge of understanding.

These theories collectively shift the focus from conveying information to promoting learner centered interactive processes of discovery and adaptation. They form a coherent logical chain for our framework: cross-cultural adaptation theory defines expected psychological outcomes (integration); Constructivist learning theory guides the teaching process (active experience); The concept of cultural translation provides necessary communication skills for cross-cultural translation.

Research Methods

This study adopts a qualitative and methodological approach. It integrates insights from multiple sources to construct a practical framework suitable for Chinese universities to host Pakistani students.

Literature analysis: A systematic review of academic works on cultural exchange between China and Pakistan and international student education was conducted to establish research gaps and theoretical foundations. This involves analyzing journal articles, policy documents, and university reports from the past decade to draw a current discourse map and identify specific deficiencies in the micro level integrated path model.

Theoretical derivation: The principles of path design are derived from the cross-cultural communication and learning theories mentioned above. These theories are not only cited, but also actively used as lenses to critique existing practices and generate specific design principles for each of the four proposed pillars.

Practical observation and case integration: Insights are drawn from the observation and practice of Honder University of Arts and Sciences in Inner Mongolia as key case references. The author conducted a participatory observation of cultural activities, reviewed course outlines that attempted to incorporate cultural elements, and had informal discussions with international student office staff and a small group of Pakistani students over the course of one academic year. This provides a grassroots understanding of operational reality, success, and pain points. The examples of international student projects, course trials, and activity feedback provide specific background for this framework.

Framework synthesis: By synthesizing the research results of the above methods, a comprehensive four pillar path was constructed. Synthesis is an iterative process in which theoretical principles are constantly checked against actual observations of the case background to ensure that the proposed strategies are not only theoretically reasonable, but also feasible within the resource and structural constraints of typical Chinese universities.

This method aims to develop a theoretical foundation and practical guidance blueprint for universities with similar student backgrounds. It is worth noting that this study prioritizes the depth and contextual relevance of methodological construction over broad statistical generalization ability, which is a typical and recognized goal of qualitative, design oriented research.

Construction of an Integrated Path Framework: Four Core Pillars

Based on the aforementioned problem focusing and theoretical guidance, this paper proposes an integrated path framework aimed at achieving effective dissemination of Chinese culture. This framework consists of four mutually supportive and interpenetrating core pillars, which jointly act on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels of international students, forming a three-dimensional cultural learning ecosystem.

(i) Cultural Immersion and Cognitive Construction in Academic Courses

The classroom is the most organized and systematic educational environment in universities. Integrating cultural dissemination into the formal curriculum system is the foundation for achieving deep understanding. Specific strategies include:

Deep thematic teaching through English as a medium: For most Pakistani students in majors taught in English, public English or academic English courses should be transformed into a core platform for cross-cultural cognition. The teaching content needs to go beyond superficial cultural introductions and focus on in-depth themes that reflect contemporary Chinese spirit and development logic, such as "technological innovation and social governance (such as mobile payments and smart cities)", "ecological civilization construction and public environmental awareness", "rural revitalization and grassroots democratic practice", etc. Through case studies, data analysis, group debates, academic writing, and other forms, guide international students to understand the complexity, achievements, and challenges of China's development through rigorous academic exploration.

Introducing a Chinese perspective in professional courses: Encourage professional teachers (such as engineering, economics, and medicine teachers) to appropriately incorporate relevant Chinese cases, technical standards, industry policies, or ethical discussions when explaining professional knowledge. For example, discussing community relations in China's high-speed rail construction in engineering ethics class, or analyzing China's "dual circulation" strategy in economics class. This makes international students realize that Chinese culture is not only a tradition of the past tense, but also a living ideology and practice that shapes contemporary Chinese methods.

Offering professional elective courses and seminars: Offering English elective courses such as "Understanding Contemporary China," "Comparative Cultural Studies between China and Pakistan," and "Silk Road Civilization Interaction," or short-term seminars to systematically and attractively explain China's core cultural concepts, social changes, and the history of China Pakistan interaction.

(ii) Experiential Integration and Emotional Resonance in Campus Life

Culture not only exists in books, but also in vibrant life practices. Design in-depth cultural experience activities aimed at promoting emotional connections and identity recognition.

From 'visit' to 'collaborative creation': design activities that require joint participation, such as jointly organizing cultural festivals or jointly producing artistic performances. The collaborative process can promote deeper participation than passive observation. For example, a one semester "Cultural Mosaic" project can pair Chinese and Pakistani students to create a short documentary or photo article comparing specific aspects of daily life (such as street food, public transportation, family celebrations), ultimately culminating in a public exhibition.

Community integration and festival sharing: Promoting access to local communities and participation in traditional festivals such as the Spring Festival can highlight shared human emotions and provide a genuine sense of social

immersion. These activities should be categorized as 'cultural immersion visits', including pre visit briefings and post visit reflection sessions to help students process their observations and connect them to broader cultural themes.

Sports and Art Clubs: Encourage participation in joint clubs or sports teams, providing an informal environment for building cross-cultural friendships and understanding. The university management department can provide seed funding and logistical support for the formation of joint clubs, such as the "China Pakistan Cricket Friendship Alliance" or explore the integration of traditional musical instruments in mixed music bands.

(iii) Interactive Co-creation and Community Maintenance on Digital Platforms

Digital tools can transcend physical and temporal limitations, expanding, enriching, and maintaining cultural ecosystems.

Interactive online community: University managed social media accounts should shift from one-way broadcasting to stimulating user generated content through thematic challenges (such as "My Day at a Chinese University"). Effective regulation and active guidance by student managers are key to maintaining a positive and engaging atmosphere. Highlighting outstanding contributions and providing small rewards can increase participation. Cloud experience and dialogue: Online live conferences, such as virtual museum visits or conversations with Chinese entrepreneurs, can overcome geographical and scheduling limitations. These meetings should include sufficient Q&A time and be recorded for future access. Collaborating with other universities can gather resources and diversify the speaker lineup.

Digital resource package: Plan and provide high-quality, accessible digital resources (such as documentaries, e-books) to support independent exploration. A dedicated section on the university's international student portal can host these resources, organized by theme (history, society, economy, art) and difficulty level, and provide guided discussion questions for self-study or group use.

(iv) Institutionalized Support and Interpersonal Communication within Peer Networks

Interpersonal communication is the most influential and trustworthy form of communication. Establishing an institutionalized peer support system is crucial.

Deepen the "Sino foreign Student Cooperation Project": Establish strict selection, training, and incentive mechanisms, recruit and cultivate a group of Chinese students with cross-cultural sensitivity and service enthusiasm as "cultural partners". Matching should not be random, but should strive to consider similar majors and common interests. The task of partners is not only to answer questions related to daily life, but also to systematically conduct regular academic discussions, cultural exchange activities, and social gatherings.

Cultivate 'opinion leaders' and volunteers among international students: Identify and cultivate volunteers from senior or actively participating Pakistani international students to participate in new student orientation, cultural event organization, and even course teaching assistant work. Their personal experiences and peer status make them more persuasive and approachable to other international students.

Establish a standardized teacher-student dialogue mechanism: Mentors (class teachers) and professional teachers should regularly engage in informal communication with international students, care about their learning and daily life, timely understand their cultural adaptation difficulties and needs, and provide personalized guidance.

These four pillars should not be independent of each other, but should form a coordinated and interconnected whole. For example, the course on "Chinese Urbanization" (first pillar) can be expanded to include visits to local historic districts (second pillar), and insights gained from the visits can be shared on digital platforms through short videos (third pillar). The entire event can be jointly planned and executed by a group of Chinese and foreign student partners (fourth pillar). The international office, academic affairs office, student affairs department, colleges and departments, and student union of the university need to establish effective interconnected work mechanisms to jointly plan and provide resource support to implement this comprehensive framework.

Potential Challenges and Systematic Response Suggestions

The implementation of any path framework faces practical challenges, and identifying and planning countermeasures in advance is the key to ensuring its feasibility.

(i) Resource and professional capability constraints.

Developing high-quality comprehensive courses, organizing in-depth cultural experience activities, and operating professional digital platforms all require corresponding human, material, and financial investment. In addition, teachers and administrative staff need to possess high-level cross-cultural teaching design and management skills.

Response suggestion: Universities should incorporate the cultural dissemination of international students into their internationalization development strategy and establish special funds. Systematically improve the cross-cultural literacy and communication skills of teachers and administrative staff through seminars, training, overseas research, and other means. Encourage interdisciplinary teamwork to develop course and activity resources.

(ii) Cultural sensitivity and avoidance of "stereotypes"

In the process of communication, improper content selection or expression may inadvertently reinforce cultural Stereotypes can even lead to cultural misunderstandings or resistance.

Response suggestion: Adhere to the principle of "two-way dialogue" and actively integrate the perspective of Pakistani culture into activity design and content selection for comparison and dialogue. Provide in-depth cultural sensitivity training for teachers and students involved in communication work, emphasizing a respectful, open, and reflective attitude. Establish a feedback mechanism to promptly listen to the feelings and opinions of international students.

(iii) The breadth and depth of participation by international students are uneven.

There are individual differences within the international student community, and not everyone has the same passion for cultural activities. How to attract and maintain the participation of the majority of people is a challenge.

Suggested response measures: Provide diverse and multi-level activity options to meet different interests and needs. Moderately linking some cultural activities with credits, certificates, or honors to form positive incentive measures. More importantly, create a warm, inclusive, and friendly overall campus atmosphere, giving international students a sense of belonging and making them more willing to participate.

(iv) The difficulty of effect evaluation.

The effects of cultural dissemination (such as attitude change and cognitive deepening) are long-term, implicit, and difficult to quantify.

Suggested response: Establish a hybrid evaluation system. In the short term, quantitative indicators such as activity participation, satisfaction surveys, and social media interaction data can be used; in the medium and long term, qualitative assessments can be conducted through in-depth interviews, focus groups, analysis of learning outcomes (such as papers and reports), and tracking the development of graduates to assess the profound impact of communication on their cognition, attitudes, and even career choices.

Research Limitations

There are several limitations that should be acknowledged in this study. Firstly, as a methodology construction paper, it mainly relies on literature review and a single institutional case (Honder college of Arts and Sciences, Inner Mongolia), which limits the universality of its research results. The applicability of this framework to large research universities, specialized technology institutions, or universities in geographically and culturally diverse regions of China needs further testing. More large-scale empirical verification is needed for different types of universities. Secondly, the effectiveness of the proposed framework and the relative importance of its four pillars require long-term implementation and rigorous evaluation, which is beyond the scope of this conceptual design study. Future action research is needed to measure the results. Thirdly, although the framework aims to achieve audience centered design, it has still been developed from the perspectives of institutions and researchers. In the initial planning stage, incorporating direct, systematic, and participatory input from Pakistani students through joint design workshops or participatory action research will make the framework more robust and responsive.

Conclusion and Outlook

This study explores the practical need for effective dissemination of Chinese culture among Pakistani students studying in Chinese universities and constructs a systematic methodology. Research suggests that in order to overcome the challenges of fragmented, superficial, and one-way dissemination in current cultural communication, it is necessary to undergo a paradigm shift: from "cultural display" to "cultural dialogue", from "event management" to "ecosystem creation". The comprehensive path framework proposed in this article is based on cross-cultural adaptation and constructivist learning theory, systematically integrating four main areas: academic curriculum, campus life, digital space, and interpersonal networks. It aims to guide Pakistani students to deepen their understanding and identification with contemporary China through a combination of immersion, experience, interaction, and support, while actively exploring and negotiating significance.

The value of this study lies in providing a "blueprint for action" that combines theoretical foundations and practical guidance. It emphasizes that the success of cultural dissemination depends not only on the excellence of individual activities, but also on whether universities can view it as a systematic project involving top-level design, resource integration, and continuous optimization. This requires collaboration between teaching, management, and service departments, as well as the joint participation of all teachers, students, and staff.

Future research can be further deepened in the following directions: firstly, empirical research can be conducted using this framework to conduct action research or comparative case studies in different types of universities, in order to test, revise, and improve the specific strategies and effectiveness of each path. Secondly, conduct in-depth research on the cultural cognitive differences within the international student community in Pakistan, such as the different reception patterns of students from different majors, genders, and regional backgrounds, in order to achieve more precise communication. Finally, broaden the research perspective and focus on the comprehensive impact of cultural exchange on international students' academic performance, mental health, and long-term attitudes towards China, in order to establish a more comprehensive evaluation model.

In short, promoting the effective dissemination of Chinese culture among Pakistani students studying abroad is a subtle and profound long-term project. It not only involves the imparting of knowledge, but also involves the exchange of hearts and minds; It serves educational goals, but also contributes to the future of friendly relations between countries. Only with scientific methods, a respectful attitude, systematic planning, and continuous efforts can we truly cultivate cultural ambassadors who understand, friendship, and love China, and let the tree of friendship between China and Pakistan grow strong.

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