

Cultural Map of China and Baluchistan in Context of China Pakistan Economic Corridor

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Abstract

Cultural diversity is a significant factor in the globalized world today. Inadequate accommodation of cultural diversity may lead towards conflict (Jiang, 2011). The respective qualitative study is an attempt to explore the cultural diversity of Baluchistan and China in context of China Pakistan Economic Corridor to attain a clear insight. The culture of Baluchistan has a few characteristics which are different from rest of Pakistan (Amjad and Shah, 2011). Hence there is a wide gap of knowledge on the account of how these two-different cultures will assimilate to provide a successful collaboration.

Keywords: Cultural Diversity, Cultural map, China Pakistan Economic Corridor and Baluchistan's Culture

Introduction

China Pakistan Economic Corridor has been in lime light often claiming to be a “game changer” opportunity. The CPEC is part a of China's One Belt One Road policy for reshaping its strategic position in different regions of the world. The understanding of this policy is extremely vital as discussed by Husain (2017) because this respective plan is believed to be deep rooted not just in the economy of Pakistan but in its culture simultaneously. This is a very fine view, but the real question is how much pragmatic this notion is on the account of the diversity between these respective cultures. China is highly urbanized industrialized society which was famous for its silk all around the world since 1200 B.C. The competitive edge is on the production of silk for many years. The Song dynasty is characterized as very progressive entity which had strong inclination towards the betterment of society through advancement in technology. From silk, tea, paper, to writing and language the Chinese culture is a clear auspice of modernity (Watson, 2005).

Whereas, Baluchistan has its own exotic culture and complexities. As a tribal province it has history of resistance towards foreign cultures. Since the occupation of Britain in 1840s till date the region of Balochistan is enveloped with conflicts and problems (Baloch). Balochistan culture has a strong aboriginal identity. The desire to protect preserve and cherish their cultural identity is often the reason behind the previous insurgencies as discussed in the report by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies in 2012 . One of major issues in context to Balochistan is the misinterpretation of their ideologies, which led towards the proliferations of stereotypical approach towards the understanding of its cultural issues. Due to naïve view of Balochistan;s Culture

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seldom one finds a neutral tone in understanding culture and its pertinent diversity in Balochistan.

Cultural Diversity

In the era of extreme globalization where world is defined in terms of web like interactions, it is not possible to have culture without the influence of other culture. These interactions created an acute need to have a perception of how different cultures and their ethnicities shape their basic values and norms. This fundamental concept leads towards the research in the interculturalizing of societies and in this context, Green Hofstede enjoys great credibility regarding his six-dimensional model of culture which differentiate different nations and societies on six major parameters. These parameters include: 1. Power Distance, 2. Uncertainty Avoidance, 3. Individualism versus Collectivism 4. Masculinity versus Femininity, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men 5. Long Term versus Short Term Orientation, 6. Indulgence versus Restraint (Hofstede,2011).

The success of international project is hugely based on the success of its manager to understand the contrasting culture which is often an issue because there is no common applicable method that can categorize the culture. So for the sake of simplicity, business manager relies on the stereotypical limited information of the culture leading to bad decisions (Meyer, 2014).

To develop a more realistic and pragmatic approach for understanding cultural diversity the cultural map technique is contemporary and insightful. The aim of developing a cultural profile based on cultural map (Meyer, 2014) is to provide a concise medium through which the similarities and differences between the two cultures can be established.

Communicating is one of the foremost variables in developing a cultural map is understanding the way different cultures communicate. As discussed by Hall "Culture is communication and communication is culture" (Hall, 1959, p. 186). The scale is differentiated on the scale of low context culture to high context culture where low context culture believe to have precise clear and written communication on contrary the high context culture prefers to have sophisticated and layered communication "Reading between the lines". Applying these criteria on the culture of Baluchistan and China, both share the high context culture communication. The evidence for Baluchistan is the deep-rooted customs and traditions such as the contract of marriage, based on informal promises rather than proper legal documents. The loyalty to their respective tribe and kin is reflecting the high context of communication (Bray, 1977). Whereas the implication of communism had long developed a sense of having high sense of unity and family. Although the official religion of China is atheist, but the percentage of Buddhist is highest that is 18.96% which influenced the paradigm of high context communication.

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Persuading: The pattern of argument and rhetoric strongly depends on the respective culture. Thus one way to understand cultural difference is the pattern in which they provide arguments to change your opinion. The basic credential is holistic versus specific way of persuading and second part is the deductive/ inductive inferences (Meyer, 2014). The basic way of reasoning between eastern culture is not restricted in linear line of thought but instead they prefer to see contradictory ideas to find the truth (Nisbett, 2003). This culture of persuasion where the argument is not based only on the rational choice but also how the argument fits in the context is holistic argument is a key characteristic of Chinese culture.

Leading: the basic debate of how the power is distributed between culture is the key when reshaping perception of a leader. The power distance index is a widely used measure of distribution of power associated with Hofstede's factor of cultural dimension. The Chinese cultural value of egalitarianism and governed by leader has ambiguous relationship while defining the value related with governed by leaders rather by laws (Fan, 2000). Thus, this study suggests that the power distance is high in China whereas according to Shah and Amjad (2011) the power distance between Baluchistan is lower as compared to KP and Punjab thus implying to have access to equal right to individuals.

Evaluating: Healthy criticism is a way which can help any society to perform better. The need of feedback is vital for the sustainability of social life. But how different cultures respond to criticism is a probe which must be answered to distinguish different cultures. The Chinese are not frank regarding their criticism as in the case with disagreement. To some extent, it seems to have a strong linkage with the Asian culture of deep respect, politeness and obedience. It is consistent with the culture of Baluchistan. The strong need of preservation and the restrictive culture (Shah & Amjad, 2011) make it difficult for open criticism.

Deciding: The deciding factor for Balochistan is hierarchical by nature that is persistent due to its tribal nomadic culture which is similar with Chinese culture because it was a nomadic. The basic structure of their economy changed when they started waving best quality silk which boosted their trade afterwards paper production, ink and tea were among few products which helped them to establish themselves as a great nation of the world (Green, 2008 & Watson, 2005). This similarity indicates a decision making system which prefers hierarchal based decision making from top to bottom.

Trusting: The importance of connections and favors are extremely important within the business networking of China as quoted "Foreigners doing business in China learn two words that describe important aspects of Chinese business culture: guanxi, which means connections, which means favor. Though guanxi translates literally as connections, expatriates in China quickly figure out that you don't build guanxi through the same kinds of networking". Moreover the strong Confucius base is one of

key factors in reshaping the trusting theme of Chinese culture which identifies five basic human relationships known as Wu Lun among them the relation between friends is trust thus forming new relationship often have credential of trust (Fan, 2000).

Disagreeing: When working together in teams, it is important how we agree and disagree to avoid the possible aspects of conflicts. Thus, the Chinese people are not straightforward, they will presume we agree but we disagree whereas in Baluchistan the disagreement is often exhibited openly.

Scheduling: the importance of time and its utilization is one of the key factor in determining the differences of two cultures. The scale is defined as polychromic versus monochromic the ability to do single activity at single time is monochromic and the ability to perform several tasks at a time is polychromic (Hammerich & Lewis, 2013). The Chinese culture is polychromic. There is although an ambiguity regarding Baluchistan's culture because to some extent, it monochromic as discussed, the activities by (Bray, 1977) but sometimes they presume to take many activities at a time (Dehwar, 1994).

Methodology

This paper has used snow ball sampling for conducting unstructured interviews from those individuals who experienced both cultures specifically Chinese and Baluchistan's culture. The transcription of interviews provided the basic themes in the manner that these two cultures reflect similarities and differences.

Findings and Discussion

The interviews provided key information regarding the primary inquiry of similarities and differences among these distinctive cultures. The similarities between the cultures include the way of communication both have high context communication. The persuading within both cultures are not rational but rather will prefer to use societal factors and emotional factors. Decision making is hierarchal i.e. top to bottom flow of authority, leading factor has similar notion as leader has the sole authority to take decision and the followers have obligations to follow the leader.

Whereas among these determinants of cultural mapping evaluating factor, disagreeing factor scheduling factor and trusting factors have totally opposite notions in both cultures such as the Chinese culture is polychromic on the account of scheduling that is they will prefer to do multitasking and perform their assigned duties on time whereas people in Baluchistan are most likely to perform work as it suits them. Seldom punctual often sluggish in completing task within the deadlines. The Chinese culture has a strong influence of modernization hence its general attitude towards criticism is mildly open but the culture of Baluchistan is extremely rigid towards criticism, not appreciating direct criticism. The disagreeing factor in Baluchistan is active and will openly express their grievances and conflicts, but Chinese culture has a passive way of dealing with disagreement (Hammerich and Lewis, 2013). The vital

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characteristic among all the factors of cultural map is the trusting factor as it has significant importance among both cultures, but the minor issue is that Chinese culture appreciates trust between their own kin and people, similar is the case with people of Baluchistan. To attain paramount advantage for this opportunity, understanding of such differences and similarities must be clear to both the people, belonging to respective cultures.

Conclusion

The debate that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor will change the destiny of this region, is not as easy as it has been said. In fact, there are many undercooked areas regarding the pragmatism of this policy. This study is a clear indication that we are very impromptu in deciding, what we will gain and how we will get advantage of this opportunity. The understanding of these differences of cultures will help to redefine our policies. The factor of trust will play a crucial role in the success and failure of Pakistan China Economic Corridor

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