



## Cultural Diffusion from China to Pakistan via the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Study of Mandarin Learning in Gilgit Baltistan of Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an enormous South Asian development initiative, with the Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan functioning as its entrance point. This enormous endeavor has caused cultural diffusion from China to Pakistan. CPEC is disseminating the non-material culture of China, which is the language spoken in Pakistan's northern regions, as evidenced by the growing prevalence of Mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan since the 2013 launch of CPEC. This study examined the effect of CPEC on the acquisition of Mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan. After distributing 150 questionnaires to Chinese-studying students in Gilgit Baltistan, we received 126 responses via online Google form and print form. The current data set yielded positive results that supported the preponderance of hypotheses. Using a method involving a confined group discussion, the influence of the Chinese language on local languages was observed, and the results were presented. The findings of this study will aid cultural ambassadors, government officials, and other relevant parties in gaining a better understanding of Pakistanis' attitudes toward acquiring Mandarin and Chinese culture.

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## 1. Introduction

A long history of affinity, cultural exchanges, and strategic and economic cooperation exists between Pakistan and China. In the 1950s, Pakistan was the first Muslim nation to recognize the People's Republic of China, becoming a US ally in the fight against communism. Pakistan and China increasingly became second residences for citizens of China and Pakistan. After the 1950s, every passing day in the history of China-Pakistan relations witnessed a new positive development. During the reign of Ayyub Khan, Pakistan and China managed a boundary dispute amicably and forged superior strategic and bilateral relations as Pakistan grew into a significant power in South Asia. Before the Sino-Indian War of 1962, India was a loyal ally of China. Pakistan, India's longstanding adversary, grew closer to China after the 1962 conflict between China and India, when China and India became enemies (Chaudhuri, 2018). During the administration of Ayyub Khan, Pakistan became a strategic ally of China, providing substantial support for China's 1965 and 1971 wars with India. China and Pakistan collaborated on a variety of economic fronts to strengthen the economies of both nations. Because Pakistan assisted China in escaping its isolation and was supported by international organizations, China was able to establish connections with numerous international actors, including the world's superpower at the time, the United States.

In 1971, Pakistan authorized a covert meeting between US Defense Secretary Henry Kissinger and Chinese officials. During the Bhutto era, China and Pakistan collaborated on a multiplicity of fronts. To be proactive, they collaborated on the strategic and economic fronts. China-Pakistan relations were further developed during Zia Ul Haq's presidency, as China-Pakistan relations are always one of Pakistan's top foreign policy priorities. This friendship grew

stronger during Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto's democratic era. During the presidency of Pervez Musharraf, Pakistani and Chinese relations reached a new pinnacle of grandeur. During this administration, Pakistan and China increased their trade volume, cooperation, and interactions significantly (R. M. Khan, 2011a, 2011b). Both nations began to collaborate in the areas of education, research, and culture. Pakistani students were provided with opportunities and scholarships to study Chinese culture and Mandarin. Prior to Pervez Musharraf's presidency, mastering Chinese was not popular in Pakistan, but it gained popularity during his administration. In Pakistan, the process of acquiring Mandarin began as a consequence of heightened cooperation and bilateral exchanges (Nitza-Makowska, 2022a, 2022b).

During Pervez Musharraf's presidency, Pakistan and China set the framework for large-scale collaboration, such as the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which became a reality in 2013 during Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's democratic term. During President Asif Ali Zardari's administration, Pakistan gave the Gwadar port to China, which was a significant step toward the development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Pakistan-China ties have evolved since the 1950s, resulting in a complex interdependence between Pakistan and China in the shape of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in 2013. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a megaproject in which China has committed to spend USD\$62 billion in Pakistan in order to make Pakistan a more appealing partner for comprehensive collaboration. CPEC projects in Pakistan seek to expand road infrastructure, commercial zones, and power generating capacity. Many CPEC projects have been completed across the nation, and they are helping to drive the economy forward. People-to-people and cultural contacts prompted Pakistanis and Chinese to learn each other's languages. Mandarin gained popularity in Pakistan. Everyone in Pakistan who is directly or indirectly connected with CPEC projects is studying Chinese. People working in Chinese enterprises and students from almost every university have made important contributions to the progress of Chinese language education in Pakistan (Salik, 2018).

Gilgit Baltistan is a region with a 500-kilometer border with China that links Pakistan to China through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is the CPEC gateway, and Chinese have infiltrated the Gilgit Baltistan area, which is home to 1.5 million people. There are two public sector universities in Gilgit Baltistan, and satellite campuses of these institutions operate in numerous areas. Chinese studies have grown in popularity in the area, and several universities have made Mandarin an obligatory subject in recent years. The great majority of students have learned Mandarin, and it is impacting regional languages. Chinese language diffusion in Gilgit-Baltistan has been attempted through Gilgit-Baltistan answers. This article investigates the learning of Mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan after the installation of CPEC projects in the nation. Gilgit Baltistan respondents gave their thoughts on learning Chinese and illustrated the influence of Chinese language on their local languages.

## 2. Literature Review

Zahid Shahab Ahmed, in his article "Impact of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor on Nation Building in Pakistan" in the *JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY CHINA* maintained that the equitable distribution of Projects can improve the relations of center and federating units in Pakistan but inequitable distribution can be harmful for the unity of provinces and the center in Pakistan. CPEC's impact on the learning of Chinese language in Pakistan has not been discussed in this article. Mir Sher Baz Khetrin and Muhammad Anjum Saeed, in their article "The CPEC and China-Pakistan Relations: A Case Study on Baluchistan" in *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* Vol. 3, No. 3 has expressed the importance of Baluchistan in CPEC and Chinese language learning in Pakistan. Muhammad Kashan Surahio<sup>1</sup>, Shengyu Gu<sup>2</sup>, Hakim Ali Mahesar<sup>3</sup>, and Mansoor Mumtaz Soomro<sup>4</sup> in their article "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Macro Environmental Factors and Security Challenges" in *SAGE Open* in January-March 2022: 1-18, has discussed the environmental factors and the security challenges of CPEC for Pakistan and China. Muhammad Saoud in his Master's Thesis, "The Influence of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Pakistan's Power Position - A Case Study on CPEC" from Master of Science in International Relations Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, has discussed the power position of Pakistan through CPEC and it provides a case study on CPEC. This thesis does not cover the area of language learning through CPEC. Lin (2017) in their article "Chinese in Pakistan: diasporic identity, faith and practice", *Asian Anthropology*, discusses the condition of Chinese diasporic identity in Pakistan, their language and other traditions which they are performing here in Pakistan.

Shamsa Kanwal<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Hameed Pitafi<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Yousaf Malik<sup>3</sup>, Naseer Abbas Khan<sup>4</sup>, and Rao Muhammad Rashid<sup>2</sup>, in their article "Local Pakistani Citizens' Benefits and Attitudes Toward China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Projects" published in *SAGE Open* July-September 2020: discussed the attitudes of the local citizens of Pakistan about the CPEC projects and it misses the aspect of Chinese language learning in Pakistan. Holden (2019) in her article "Law, governance, and culture in Gilgit-Baltistan: introduction," in the journal *South Asian History and Culture*, has discussed the law, governance and the culture of Gilgit Baltistan but the traces of Chinese culture and Language which the region has been witnessing for the last many years. According to a study of AKRSP Gilgit Baltistan "A Prospective Study Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, 2017 "Horizons of CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan: A Prospective Study" CPEC has been discussed as a great opportunity for the economic development of Gilgit Baltistan through CPEC but this article has also not mentioned the rising importance of Chinese language in Pakistan which is growing currently in Pakistan.

Ms. Saadia Beg\* Dr. Tasawar Baig† Dr. Asif Khan‡ in their article "Impact of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Human Security and the Role of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB)" in the Journal *Global Social Sciences Review (GSSR)* had discussed the Impact of CPEC on the human security in Gilgit Baltistan but the impact of Chinese language which is influencing the local languages has not been discussed. Mark S.K. Shuma , Fang Gaoa \*, Linda Tsungb and Wing-Wah Kia in their article "South Asian students' Chinese language learning in Hong Kong: motivations and strategies" in the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* has discussed the motivations and strategies for the South Asian students' Chinese language learning in Hong Kong. Although the article is about language learning but it covers the students of South Asia in Hong Kong. Zhang et al. (2018) in their article "Social impact assessment of investment activities in the China-Pakistan economic corridor", *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, has discussed the investment activities in CPEC but it do not discuss the impact of Chinese language in Pakistan. Furthermore, the following authors have also discussed the learning of Chinese language.

### **2.1. Objectives**

The objectives of the study are given below:

- To explore the rising importance of Chinese Language in Pakistan and especially in the Gilgit Baltistan region which is the immediate neighbor of China.
- To investigate the causes of the of the rising popularity of Chinese Language in Gilgit Baltistan after the initiation of CPEC in 2013.
- To discover the impact of Chinese language in the local languages of Gilgit Baltistan.
- To analyze the trend of learning Chinese language in Gilgit Baltistan.

### **2.2. Research Questions**

The research questions of the study are given below:

- Why and when the students of Gilgit Baltistan started involving in the learning of Chinese language in different language centers of Pakistan?
- To what extent Mandarin has deeply penetrated in the culture and languages of Gilgit Baltistan?

## **3. Research Methodology**

Two distinct techniques were used to collect primary data for this investigation. The initial approach used to conduct this study was quantitative. 150 respondents from Gilgit Baltistan were given 30 Likert scale questions. These respondents were Chinese language pupils from a variety of colleges in Pakistan. Using SPSS, 126 respondents' responses were processed and thoroughly examined. These Likert scale questions were created with four important research objectives in mind. The questionnaire has the capacity to achieve the objectives of the study. Secondly, a closed group discussion was held to learn about the influence of Chinese language on Pakistani local languages. A group of twenty students was gathered in the Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral dormitory in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, for this purpose. The students' names were intended to be A-Z, and they were having a casual debate about two distinct themes. During the conversation, the students of Gilgit Baltistan were attentively observed using Chinese terminology. After nearly an hour of debate, it was discovered that the students of Gilgit Baltistan used a lot of Chinese

vocabulary. To achieve the best outcomes, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was applied.

### 3.1 Limitations of the Study

This study investigates the Cultural Diffusion from China to Pakistan via the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor by examining the trend of Mandarin Language Learning in Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan. The cohort of the current research consists of pupils who study Chinese in various Chinese language centers in various Pakistani cities. Chinese culture is infiltrating Pakistan through a variety of other channels besides language acquisition. By interacting with Chinese travelers in different cities, a great number of Pakistanis acquire the Chinese language and culture. Current research focuses solely on the increase in Chinese language acquisition since the inception of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. Gilgit Baltistan is located in the border region between Pakistan and China, and Gilgit residents do not require a visa to enter China; instead, they are issued a permit to access the province of Xinxiang. Chinese culture diffuses rapidly in the Gilgit region, but slowly in the other main provinces of Pakistan. The cultural diffusion from China to the Gilgit Baltistan region is distinct from its diffusion to Pakistan's other main provinces. Thus, the scope of the present study is restricted to the transmission of language acquisition from China to Pakistan, which is merely one aspect of culture.

### 3.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The term "theoretical implications" refers to the connections between the findings of this study and other ideas or theories. The practical implications focus on the actions that may be taken as a direct consequence of the findings. The results of this research indicate that China's megaeconomic projects in Pakistan, such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, are having the effect of diluting the influence of Chinese culture in that country. Those who do not want to import a foreign culture may find themselves in a difficult position as a result of the spread of a foreign culture, which may bring about massive changes in the nation. Pakistan is a mostly Muslim nation that also has a significant cultural heritage. Islam is the official religion of Pakistan. There are a lot of features of Chinese culture that may not be compatible with the culture of Pakistan, and this can result in a cultural collision in Pakistan. In the past, the English language was considered a sign of respectability in Pakistan, and it also had a higher prestige than the local and national languages of Pakistan. This was because English was considered an international language. People in Pakistan will be more interested in learning Chinese now that it is a symbol of respectability, and they will do so. It is expected that native languages will continue to be given primacy in Pakistan.

## 4. Institutions which promote Mandarin in Pakistan

There are a number of organizations in Pakistan with the goal of promoting the Chinese language, but the role that public sector universities and other organizations play is essential to the spread of the Chinese language in Pakistan. There are now three institutions that are assisting in the propagation of the Chinese language: a state university, a private university, and the CPEC Center KIU. At Pakistan's public universities, the teaching of Mandarin is now a required component of the academic curriculum across the board in all areas of study. Students from Gilgit Baltistan and employees in Pakistan who come into contact with Chinese people in a variety of settings are acquiring Chinese language skills. Table 1 is a list of the institutions that are engaged in the process of passing on knowledge of Mandarin.

**Table 1: Chinese Language Centers and GB Students in Pakistan**

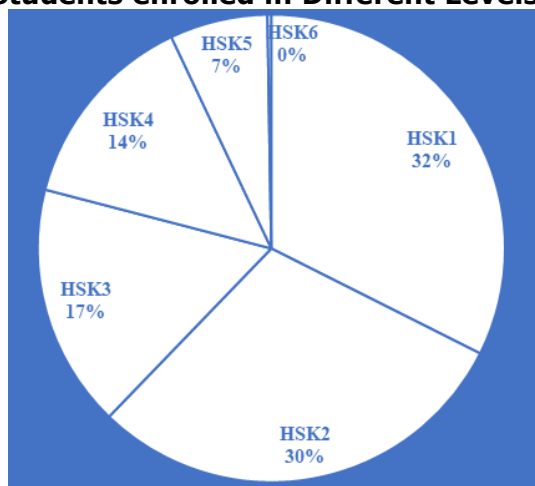
No	Name of Language Institutes	Established Year	GB Students Before CPEC	GB Students After CPEC
1	Pakistan China Institute,	2009	4	20
2	Obortunity	2016	-	20
3	National University of Modern Languages	1969	50	100
4	China Dream Institute	2016	-	10
5	Aryan Institute of Chinese Learning	2017	-	20
6	Green Red Institute of Chinese Language	2019	-	10
7	Confucius Institute	2014	-	10
8	PACANS	2010	3	13
9	University of Education	2014	-	37
10	5 Star Institute Islamabad	2016	-	16
11	ICT Training	2015	-	19

12	FLI	2016	-	23
13	The House of Knowledge	2017	-	11
14	IIUI	2017	33	49
15	NICON	1984	17	34
16	BERLITZ	2001	22	40
17	Institute of Career Development and SCS Karachi	2008	16	53
18	Institute of modern Languages Faisal Abad	2006	19	37
20	Confucius Institute at KU	2014	-	45
21	Lecolefor Advanced Studies	1998	17	51
22	Eureka	2010	03	15
23	Deligent Group	2017	-	13
24	ESLMS	2012	10	34
25	British Institute	1989	02	29
26	University of Agriculture Faisal Abad	2017	-	37
27	Peshawar Degree College of Commerce University of Peshawar	2017	-	24
28	Peshawar College of Engineering	2018	04	32
29	Karakorum University Gilgit	2018	-	579
30	Baltistan University GB	2020	-	409
31	Hazara University	2017	-	129
32	Total			1919

Source: Authors own Calculation from Different Language Centers of Pakistan

Students in Gilgit-Baltistan are given the opportunity to study Chinese at a variety of levels. Beginning with HSK1 and going all the way up to HSK6, there are six different levels of Chinese. In order to satisfy the standards of the institutions in China, students from Gilgit Baltistan who enroll in Chinese-taught academic programs there are required to finish HSK5-level coursework. A degree prerequisite that is considered standard at many colleges nowadays is HSK3. Mandarin is taught at a variety of levels throughout Pakistan's language classrooms.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Students enrolled in Different Levels of Mandarin out of 1919**



Source: Authors own Calculation from different language Labs of Pakistan

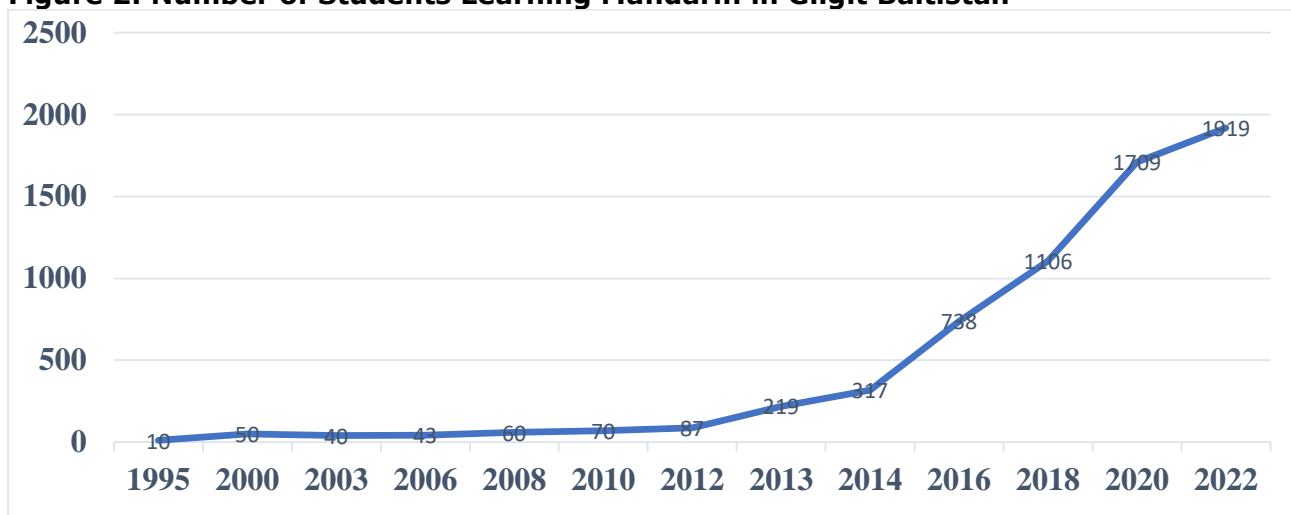
The majority of pupils in Gilgit Baltistan are enrolled in the HSK1 program, and they are able to finish this level with relative ease. A significant number of pupils in Gilgit-Baltistan have completed both levels of the HSK exam. Then just a few pupils signed up for HSK3 and HSK4, respectively. The proportion of Pakistani students who are currently enrolled in various levels of Mandarin may be seen clearly in the pie chart shown in Figure 1 below.

**5. The Rising Popularity of Mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan Region of Pakistan**

Currently, the majority of students from Gilgit Baltistan are devoted to learning mandarin in institutions throughout Pakistan. The researcher contacted approximately 126 students from Gilgit Baltistan who are learning Chinese in various regions of Pakistan. After distributing 150 questionnaires to Chinese language learners in Gilgit Baltistan, only 126 responses were effectively collected. Chinese language has become most eminent language in Gilgit Baltistan after the inauguration of China Pakistan Economic corridor (R. Khan, 2020). Our 60% respondents strongly agreed that the initiation of CPEC increased the importance of Mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan, 50% respondents agreed with this statement while 10% respondents remained

neutral about this statement and less than 5 % respondents disagreed with this statement. Not a single respondent strongly disagreed with this statement. Majority of the students of Gilgit Baltistan currently learning Chinese language have the view that Chinese language has been tremendously imperative after the start of CPEC. Before the initiation of CPEC few students of Gilgit Baltistan were studying Chinese language in few language institutions in Pakistan but after the commencement of CPEC learning Chinese become a trend among the students of Gilgit Baltistan. The number of Students learning Chinese language is increasing day by day. Figure no 2 shows the rise of number of students who learn Chinese language after 2013.

**Figure 2: Number of Students Learning Mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan**



Source: Author's own calculation by visiting different institutions in Pakistan

Chinese language has gained much importance in the region and currently people with Chinese language skills have a superior chance of finding a job in Gilgit Baltistan region (Z. S. Ahmed, 2019). More than 34% respondents strongly agreed with the point that Chinese language skills can increase the chances of employment for the people of GB in Pakistan. About 51% respondents agreed with this statement, 7 percent remained neutral, 5.6percent respondents disagreed with the idea while 8% respondents strongly disagreed with this point of view. Chinese language in Gilgit Baltistan was not that much popular in the region prior to the commencement of CPEC but it became most important language after the inauguration of CPEC. In this case 37.6 percent respondents strongly agreed with the view that Chinese language was not that much important before the Initiation of CPEC, 38.4 percent agreed, 20 percent remained neutral, while 3.2 percent respondents disagreed with this statement.

After 2013 more Chinese workforces came to the border regions of Pakistan to toil in different projects under CPEC (Amir, 2016). This growing existence of Chinese people in Pakistan stirred the students of Gilgit Baltistan to absorb Chinese language. For the purpose of interacting with the people of China in Pakistan the students of GB took interest in learning Mandarin. More than 24.6% respondents strongly agreed with the statement that they are interested in learning Chinese language because they want to intermingle with the Chinese people who are working in different projects. Only about 2.2% respondents agreed with the above statement, 14.3percent respondents remained neutral, while 7.9percent respondents disagreed with this point of view. China has started working on more than 46 projects after 2013. These huge projects created great opportunities of work for those who know a little bit Chinese language. China has completed many projects in the energy sector, Infrastructure, Gwadar and in the Special Economic Zones but still there are many projects under construction and under consideration. Figure 3. illustrates the number of projects in each sector in Pakistan which have been completed or under construction. Chinese Culture is considerably rich in different facets. It is gorgeous for many Asian nations like Pakistan (Zainab Iftikhar and Ishtiaq Hossain, 2020). Many students in Pakistan especially the students of Gilgit Baltistan want to know about the culture of Chinese People. About 21.4 percent respondents strongly agreed that they want to know about the culture of China through the learning of Chinese language. More than 30% respondents agreed with this point while 22.2% remained neutral, 20.6% disagreed with the point while 5.6 percent

respondents strongly disagreed with this point of view. These days China has become a best visiting place for the students of Pakistan (Su, 2017).

**Figure 3: Number of Projects Under CPEC in Pakistan from 2013 Onward**



Source: China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Islamabad Pakistan

More than 30000 students of Pakistan are currently studying in China (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Many Pakistani students are learning Chinese language to visit China in near future. More than 28 % respondents strongly agreed with the point that they want to visit China in future for this purpose. About 36.8% respondents agreed with the above statement, 13.6% remained neutral, 13.6% disagreed with the point and only 8% respondents strongly disagreed with this point of view. The universal importance of Chinese proverbs, folktales, and the sayings attract many students in other countries to learn Chinese language. More than 23% respondents of this survey strongly agreed with the point of view that Chinese Proverbs, sayings and folktales attract them to learn Chinese language. More than 26 % respondents agreed, 26.6% remained neutral, 20.6% disagreed while only 4% strongly disagreed with this statement. The mounting collaboration of Pakistan and China in each passing day in the history of Pakistan and China relations have also inspired the students of Gilgit Baltistan to learn Chinese language (Khayyam, 2018). In this case 21.4 % respondents strongly agreed with the point that the rising collaboration between Pakistan and China is one of the greatest causes of their motivation towards Chinese language. About 42.2 % respondents agreed with this statement, 18.3 remained neutral, 13.5% disagreed and 4 percent respondents strongly disagreed with this statement.

These days many Chinese companies and enterprises are active in Pakistan. The mushroom growth of Chinese corporations arose after the instigation of CPEC in 2013. Many students of Gilgit Baltistan want to chase jobs in these Chinese forums in Pakistan. About 31% respondents strongly agreed with the above statement, 34.1% agreed, 15.1% remained neutral, 15.1% disagreed with the statement while 4 percent respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement. Many students of Gilgit Baltistan want to open their own businesses in the Hotel line and they want to boost the hotel industry. Tourism in Gilgit Baltistan has excessive potential which is apprehended by the students of GB. About 33.3 percent respondents strongly agreed with the statement that they want to boost up their hotel Industry in GB that's why they are learning Chinese language, 38% students agreed with the above statement and 15.9% remained neutral, 8.7 disagreed with the statement while 4% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement.

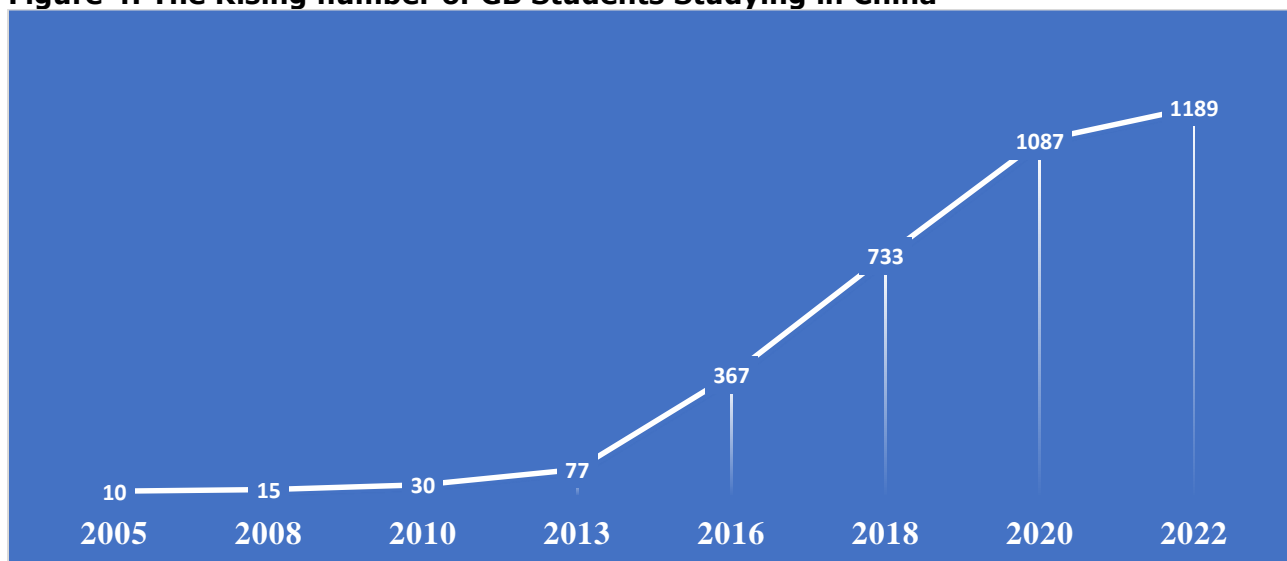
Pakistani varsities are strongly emphasizing on the need of Chinese language in the world. Many universities have included Mandarin as part of their university syllabus. Our 23.8 percent respondents strongly agreed with the point that the importance of Chinese language stressed by the universities of Pakistan encourages them to learn mandarin. About 41.3% students agreed with this statement while 20.6% respondents remained neutral in this regard. Some 11.1% student disagreed with the statement while 3.2% respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. One of the biggest causes of learning Chinese in Gilgit Baltistan is that Chinese language is somehow relevant to the local languages of Gilgit Baltistan. Local languages of Gilgit Baltistan have no relations with Urdu and other Pakistani languages (Asif et al., 2019). About 15.1 percent respondents strongly agreed that Chinese language is similar to the local languages

of Gilgit Baltistan, 20.6 % respondents agreed with the statement, 23% remained neutral while 21.4 % disagreed and 19.8% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement.

In the CPEC projects many Chinese people are working in Pakistan. 18.3% respondents strongly agreed that the increasing presence of Chinese people in CPEC projects attracted them to learn Chinese language. 41.3% students agreed this statement, 20.6% remained neutral, 17.5% disagreed and 2.4% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement. China is one of the biggest exporters of the world. It exports mostly to the third world countries of the world. Chinese imported items contain guidance in Chinese language (Haq & Farooq, 2016). About 19% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Chinese imported items revived their interest in learning Chinese language, 35.7% respondents agreed, 26.2% remained neutral, 16.7% respondents disagreed with the statement while 2.4 % students strongly disagreed with this point of view.

In Gilgit Baltistan, many students are going to China for work and study. According to a survey more than 800 students of Gilgit Baltistan are studying in different provinces of China (Kanwal, Chong, & Pitafi, 2019). Figure no 4 shows the rise in the number of students who study in China. Prior to the initiation of CPEC in 2013 the number of GB students in China is a few but after 2013 this number increased significantly and studying in China has become a top trend among the students of Gilgit Baltistan these days. Awareness sessions in the educational institutions are actively arranged to prepare the mind of GB students for their higher education in China by those scholars who studied in China. Chinese language has gained importance in the region because students of this region want to avail any scholarship opportunity in China. Figure 4. Shows the rising number of GB students in PRC.

**Figure 4: The Rising number of GB Students Studying in China**



Source: Provincial Ministry of Education Gilgit Baltistan

About 22.2 percent respondents strongly agreed with the view point that they want to work with a Chinese enterprise that's why they are learning Chinese language. More than 35.7% respondents agreed, 22.2% remained neutral, 15.9% respondents disagreed and only 4% student strongly disagreed with the above statement. Chinese language in Gilgit Baltistan has minimized the importance of other international languages. More than 12% respondents strongly agreed with the above statement, 24.6% respondents agreed, 22.2% remained neutral, 22.2 % disagreed while 18.3% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement. CPEC became the major factor which motivated the students of Gilgit Baltistan to learn Chinese language. About 26.2% respondents strongly agreed with this point of view, 35.7% agreed with the above statement, 17.5% remained neutral, 16.7 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed with the above statement.

Although Chinese language is tougher than many other international languages but still students of Gilgit-Baltistan are interested in learning Chinese language. About 37.3% students strongly agreed that Chinese is a tougher language than any other international Language,



32.5% respondents agreed with this statement, 19% remained neutral, 7.9% disagreed and 3.2% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement. More than 19.8 % respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Chinese language is the most demanding language in the world these days, 36.5% respondents agreed with this point, 23% respondents remained neutral and 18.3% respondents disagreed while 2.4 % respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement. Chinese apps like WeChat, Tencent meeting and Tik Tok are widely famous all over the world. About 18.3% respondents strongly agreed with the point that Chinese apps are useful for learning Chinese language, 36.5% agreed, 21.4% remained neutral, 17.5% disagreed, while 6.3% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement.

The recent trend in Pakistan to visit China for the purpose of study has been much popular. Many students in Pakistan are learning Chinese language (Mushtaq, 2015). About 27.8% respondents strongly agreed with the point that their motivation to learn Chinese language is because of the recent trend of going to China for studies, 39.7% respondents agreed, 19 percent remained neutral, 9.5% disagreed while 4% strongly disagreed with the above statement. The intercultural connectivity which was boosted by the CPEC has performed many cultural interactions between China and Pakistan. Language is a non-material culture which has been entered in the Gilgit Baltistan region (Qayyum, 2018). Our 32.5% respondents strongly agreed that CPEC has increased inter-Cultural connectivity between the people of GB with China. 46% respondents agreed, 9.5% remained neutral, 11.1% respondents disagreed while only 8% respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement.

The flux of Chinese tourists in Gilgit Baltistan region after the launch of CPEC has influenced the culture of Gilgit Baltistan (M. S. Ahmed, 2016). Our 21.4 percent respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the flux of Chinese tourists in Gilgit Baltistan motivated them to learn Chinese language, 43.7% respondents agreed with the statement, 19.8% remained neutral, 12.7% disagreed while 2.4% respondents strongly disagreed with the view point. The rising status of Chinese culture in the world is attracting many learners of languages to learn Chinese language. About 18.3% respondents strongly agreed with the above statement, 34.9% agreed, 27.8% remained neutral, 16.7% disagreed, 2.4% strongly disagreed with the above statement. Chinese culture is rapidly diffusing in the culture of Gilgit Baltistan, 13.5% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 39.7% agreed, 31% remained neutral, 11.1% disagreed, 4.8% strongly disagreed with this point of view. The international importance of Chinese language is further motivating the new students to learn Chinese (Jalil, 2018). About 14.3% respondents strongly agreed with the view that the international importance of Chinese language has compelled many students to learn Chinese language, 36.5% agreed, 27% remained neutral, 17.5% disagreed, 4.8% strongly disagreed with the statement. Chinese language has also impacted the local languages of Gilgit Baltistan. Chinese vocabulary has entered in the local languages through different ways. 8.7% respondents strongly agreed with the point that Chinese language has impacted the local languages of Gilgit Baltistan. About 31% agreed 25.4% remained neutral, 21.4% disagreed, 13.5% strongly disagreed with this statement.

The establishment of Chinese language centers in Pakistan further motivated the students of Gilgit Baltistan to learn Chinese Language (Mushtaq, 2015). About 14.3% respondents strongly agreed with the point of view that the language centers established after the launch of CPEC in Pakistan motivated the students of GB towards learning Chinese language. More than 50% agreed, 17.5% remained neutral, 13.5% disagreed, 4.8% strongly disagreed with the statement. CPEC has changed the attitude of the people of Gilgit Baltistan about Chinese culture. More than 21.4% respondents strongly agreed with the point that the attitude of Gilgit Baltistan people has been changed about Chinese culture after the launch of CPEC. More than 35.7% agreed, 20.6% remained neutral, 15.9% disagreed, 6.3% strongly disagreed with this statement. Chinese culture is diffusing in Gilgit Baltistan because it is the region which connects Pakistan with China. Inter-marriages between the people of China and Gilgit Baltistan are rising in number after the launch of CPEC. our 15.9% respondents strongly agreed with the point that many people of Gilgit Baltistan are marrying with the women of China after the initiation of CPEC. 25.4% students agreed, 29.4% remained neutral, 14.3 % people disagreed while 15.1% respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

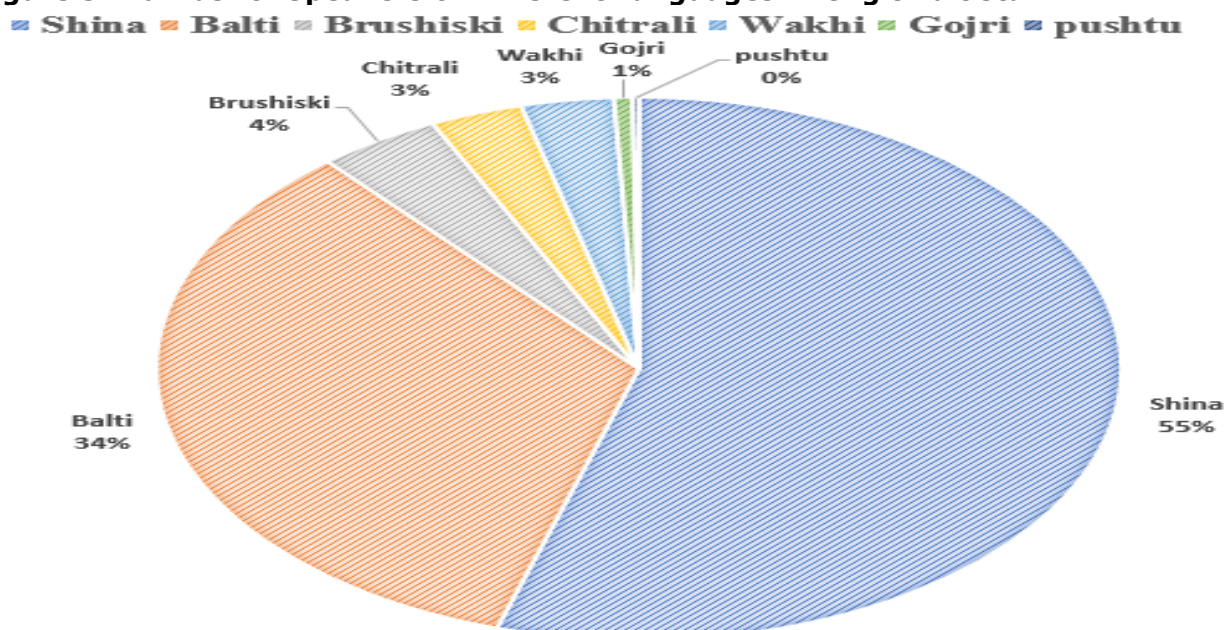
These results clearly identify that there are several reasons of the popularity of mandarin in Gilgit Baltistan. The biggest reason of the involvement of GB students in the learning of Chinese language is the commencement of China Pakistan Economic Corridor CPEC which changed the

fate of Pakistan economically and also this mega project has diffused its culture to the border regions of China. Language is the most important aspect of culture and it is a non-material culture itself. The diffusion of Chinese culture in the Gilgit Baltistan region has been proved in this study through a quantitative methodology. Furthermore, a focused group discussion further exposed the impact of Chinese language in the local languages of Gilgit Baltistan.

### 6. Impact of Hanyu Vocabulary on Local Languages of Gilgit Baltistan

In a hostel where most Gilgit Baltistan students studied Chinese, a focused group discussion was held. Gilgit Baltistan students lived in a hostel while attending multiple universities and language institutions. To test Gilgit Baltistan students' Chinese vocabulary, the focused group discussed two subjects. The first topic was "Importance of Education," and the second was "Suicides in Gilgit Baltistan." No language was restricted in the group's informal talk. Urdu and English were the common languages because majority of the pupils spoke diverse languages. Gilgit Baltistan has over seven languages, and these pupils represented them all. In Figure 5, Gilgit Baltistan's seven languages are shown. Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan's multilingual province, speaks more than seven languages.

**Figure 5: Number of Speakers of Different Languages in Gilgit Baltistan**



Source: Authors own Calculation from Provincial Ministry of Tourism and Culture Gilgit Baltistan

Shina language is the language of majority in Gilgit Baltistan but still many students were unable to understand in Shina language. In this way discussion was initiated in Urdu language. Generally, in Pakistan people use English words in Urdu language and similarly the people of Gilgit Baltistan also speak Urdu and use English words in their Urdu language. After the initiation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor between Pakistan and China, Chinese language has become one of the most popular languages in Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan. Many students generally use Chinese words in their own languages. In the focused group discussion, many times it was witnessed that students used many Chinese words.

When the discussion was started on the importance of education a student (y) used the Chinese word "Dasuan" 打算 to express about a plan. One another student (S) used "Dangran" 當然 in the discussion. The discussion was going on while a student (T) used the word "gangcai" 剛纔 to express his views in the subject of discussion. A student (H) used the word "Jingly" 警力 to express his point of view about a profession. One another student(I) used the word "Lishi" 历史 to express a field of study in the discussion. The discussion went on and one another student (Z) used the word "nuli" 努力 to express a quality of good students.

In this way the students were asked to continue a discussion on a local issue which is Suicides in Gilgit Baltistan. A student (G) used the word "ranhou" 當然 to discuss suicides in Gilgit

Baltistan region. A student (K) used the word "rugua" 如果 to share a possibility in the group. The discussion went on and a student (L) used a Chinese quotation "man man lai" 慢慢来 to express the improvement of government system in the future in Gilgit Baltistan. The names of Chinese companies were used most of the time in this close group discussion like Zhong, Huawei etc. A student (M) used the word "turan" 当然 to suggest some measures for the control of suicide rates in Gilgit Baltistan. One more student (N) used the word "haipa" 害怕 to express her fear about suicide in Gilgit Baltistan.

Chinese religious thoughts like Confucius thoughts and Taoist thoughts were also quoted by many students in this close group discussion. Some sayings of Confucius were mentioned by Student P in English language to explain a particular event. In this way one more student (Q) used the word "banfa" 办法 to express a method for the control of suicide rate in Gilgit Baltistan. In this way a student (W) used the word "bianhuwa" 变化 to explain the trend of suicides in the Gilgit Baltistan region.

## **7. Conclusion**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has resulted in substantial alterations to Pakistan's social fabric, and Chinese influence is permeating Pakistani society. Gilgit Baltistan is a Pakistani territory that shares a frontier with China. This region's culture has been most influenced by Chinese culture. People of Gilgit Baltistan believe that the Chinese language contains the key to their future, so it has become the most widely spoken language in the region (Asif & Ling, 2019). Particularly in Gilgit Baltistan, there has been an explosion of Chinese language centers in Pakistan since the beginning of CPEC. Since the establishment of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the Chinese language has grown in prominence, according to the majority of respondents to the survey conducted for this research. The purpose of the concentrated group discussion was to examine the terminology used by Chinese learners in the Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan. Students from Gilgit Baltistan utilized a great deal of Chinese vocabulary during the group discussion. China-Pakistan Economic Cooperation is a form of cultural cooperation between Pakistan and China, as evidenced by the findings of this study. The Chinese language and culture have permeated Pakistan, but the present study concentrates on the transmission of Chinese culture in China's border regions, such as Gilgit Baltistan. According to the survey, there have been numerous cross-cultural marriages, and many Gilgit Baltistan residents hope to marry Chinese women in the future (Lin, 2017).

The Chinese language is swiftly penetrating Gilgit Baltistan's culture, and it can be deduced from research that the Chinese language will replace English as Pakistan's most popular and in-demand language in the near future. Chinese will shortly become a required subject in the institutions of Gilgit Baltistan, and Pakistan will follow suit. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor is an ongoing initiative between the two nations that will bring the two nations and cultures closer together (Waqar, July 2019). China is on its way to becoming the world's economic superpower in the near future, so Chinese culture will soon dominate Pakistani culture. Massive exports of China's material culture are headed to Pakistan, while the country's non-material culture will arrive in the form of language, values, and knowledge, among other things.

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