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The Impact of Language Exchange Programs (LEPs) on Socio-Economic Development in Regions Along with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)



Abstract: - The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an extensive venture that fosters economic cooperation between two countries by connecting several regions in Pakistan and China. This research examines the role of LEPs (language exchange programs) in determining socio-economic growth in CPEC regions. This study revolves around those Pakistani students who participated in an LEP in terms of the Chinese Language Scholarship Program by the Govt. of Punjab, from 2017 to 2019 in China. This research looks at their involvement with the language exchange program, which enabled them to be a valued asset to their country and a contributor to the socioeconomic growth of the regions along with the CPEC route. As a result, the study's goal is to highlight the role of LEPs on socio-economic development in regions along CPEC, as well as to become acquainted with participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding the efficacy and impact of language exchange programs on socioeconomic development in CPEC regions. The study adopts a mixed-method approach and participants who have been part of the particular LEP from 2017 to 2019. The current study explicitly recommends that Pakistani government officials keep up these programs to prepare more professional language trainers and researchers. The study's findings highlight the profound effects of language exchange programs demonstrating improved linguistic proficiency, deepened cross-cultural and linguistic understandings, and beneficial socioeconomic effects. Language competency is essential for promoting cross-cultural cooperation and preparing young people for important responsibilities in the changing CPEC environment, as evidenced by the participants' overwhelmingly positive experiences and statistical validation.

Keywords: LEP, Socio-Economic Development, CPEC, Pakistan, China.

I. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to highlight a unique aspect of this collaboration: the role of language exchange programs in determining socio-economic growth within the CPEC zones. Understanding the impact of language exchange on socio-economic growth is critical in CPEC, where economic corridors cross geographical boundaries. This study combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to elucidate the intricate aspects of language exchange projects including students from Pakistan who attended LEP (language exchange programs) in China from 2017 to 2019. As the global community watches the CPEC evolve, this research aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the role of language exchange programs in determining the socio-economic destiny of the associated regions. A language exchange program is a type of language learning that involves mutual language practice between learning partners who speak different languages [1], [2]. Language exchanges can take place via language learning platforms, language schools, social media, or even face-to-face events [3], [2]. According to this study, the achievement of economic development goals is primarily dependent on the effectiveness of communication to the individual. This is because development begins with the individual, then the family, then the community, and finally, the entire nation. Effective language use and communication with the person are essential for successful development. Real growth can only occur when the person owns his or her goals [4].

For both nations, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is revolutionary. Pakistan is very committed to the project's timely completion since, if it is successful, it will quicken the nation's economic expansion and make it one of the fastest-growing economies globally. CPEC, a substantial commercial route added to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), will be a trade and commerce channel that will not only connect Pakistan to China but will also pave the way for a land connection to the entire South Asian region. In addition, the project will generate an endless amount of "economic opportunities" and "host other positive externalities." [5]. Because this project entails the development of multiple economic-stimulating projects, including the creation of industrial parks, energy projects, hospitals, airports, fiber optic networks, education and technical skill institutes, industrial parks, and special economic zones, jobs will be created. Pakistan's economy has experienced a notable uptick, notwithstanding the

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positive connections between the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and its development and progress [5]. There could be an additional 4 million opportunities for employment in Pakistan. Trade will rise by 9.8% if Pakistan completes the project and carries out the necessary reforms [5]. Pakistan has many opportunities because of the fluctuating nature of Chinese investment, business, and manpower flourishing outside the border. Pakistan is an important partner in the Belt and Road Initiative's execution [5]. The benefits of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would surpass strong trade and economic ties between the two countries and encompass cumulative cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative [5].

The current study attempts to impart the reality that language exchange programs could be best to prepare language professionals who could be the teachers and facilitators for those Pakistani natives who want to maintain business relationships with China on the CPEC route. Since 2017, 500 students in different groups and times have been sent to China by Mr. Shabaz Sharif's Govt. But that number was too low as this could not fulfill the linguistics and socio-economic needs of the long route of CPEC. Exchange programs are indeed costly and difficult to manage [6], in a developing country like Pakistan. However, the outcomes of the LEP (started in 2017 and ended in 2019) showed splendid marks in the field of translation, authorship, research, and Chinese language demonstration and foreign language training in different CSCs (China Study Centers) in Pakistan. The study imparted the efficacy of these LEPs by collecting information from those students who joined that particular LEP. They are translators, instructors, demonstrators, authors, and researchers as well as contributing to the socio-economic development in the CPEC regions.

(a) *Significance of the study*

Understanding and appreciating each other's language and culture can result in stronger diplomatic relationships and enhanced bilateral relations, successful business relationships by analyzing the effects of language exchange on socio-economic development. The study highlights the importance of language exchange programs (LEPs) in developing individuals' skills and competencies. Participants who increased their language skills and cultural awareness helped to produce a professional and culturally competent workforce in the CPEC regions. The research findings can help shape policies and efforts linked to language instructions and exchange within the context of CPEC. Policymakers can utilize the findings to create programs that target certain areas that contribute to socioeconomic growth. The research implies that language exchange programs can contribute to long-term socioeconomic progress in CPEC locations by creating positive attitudes and views among participants. The study sheds light on the efficacy of such programs in fostering not just linguistic competency but cultural awareness, arguing for the inclusion of comparable initiatives in the educational curriculum. According to the study, language exchange programs (LEPs) help to strengthen social and economic ties.

(b) *Research Objectives*

Objectives of the study are:

1. To emphasize the role of Language Exchange Programs in fostering socio-economic understanding and appreciation in regions along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).
2. To explore the attitudes and perceptions of the participants regarding the impact of language exchange programs on socio-economic development in regions connected by the CPEC.

(c) *Research questions*

1. How does a language exchange program play a role in fostering socio-economic understanding and appreciation in regions connected by the CPEC?
2. What are the attitudes and perceptions of the participants regarding the impact of language exchange programs on socio-economic development in CPEC regions?

(d) *Delimitation of the study*

The study is delimited to those students who have been part of the Chinese Language Scholarship Program by the Punjab Govt. in 2017 to 2019 in China. Their attitudes and perceptions have been tabulated through an electronic questionnaire based on the Likert scale and through interviews.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language exchanges are widely thought to improve language skills, particularly speaking fluency and listening comprehension [3]. Language exchange programs are an excellent method to meet native speakers, enhance your language skills, and learn about other cultures [2]. Language exchanges are increasingly being used as part of the

language learning curriculum at universities. Two persons from different countries agree to help each other learn their respective languages in a language exchange program [2]. Typically, two native speakers teach each other their native language [1].

The significant role of language in socioeconomic growth cannot be overstated. There is no development where there is no language, and this is a reality. The goal of language is communication. The primary function of language is a form of communication. Effective communication, in turn, encourages development. Communication is an essential component of development, and language is used to manifest. Language must be seen to communicate. intended meaning as a vehicle to attaining predetermined aims, and not an end in itself. In this situation, the set aims would be education, national unity, and/or identity as well as socioeconomic progress [4]. Language use facilitates socio-economic development, unity, and attainment of education [4]. We believe that language is critical for development and unity. In this context, we look at the role of language exchange programs in facilitating economic development in the regions along the CPEC. In other words, communication is effective when messages are delivered accurately and understandably to the intended recipient. If the user does not understand the message, communication breaks down, rendering the information useless for making decisions during the development process[4]

CPEC has numerous advantages for both Pakistan and China. Although the Chinese use Mandarin and Pakistanis use Urdu and other Pakistani languages, English dominates the operationalization of the CPEC project for policy formation and implementation, with Mandarin coming in second [7]. At many levels, China and Pakistan are attempting to promote each other's languages. However, these attempts should be increased in number because CPEC is a very long route. The demand for Chinese language professionals is very high. This could be fulfilled through successful LEPs. As, it is accepted that none of the work done in this field examines language concerns through the lens of economic benefits for both countries, such as increased employment, improved people-to-people relations, cultural exchanges, and language promotion [5]. Pakistan's geographical location is critical and perfect in terms of economic, political, and energy interests for the entire world [5].

The increasing popularity of Chinese language learning in Pakistan is inextricably linked to CPEC. With the expansion of CPEC, the majority of students in Pakistan want to learn Chinese. Not only students but also teachers, are interested in studying Chinese to have a bright future in the CPEC mega project and its associated programs. According to Ying (2017), as CPEC progresses, the demand for Chinese language instruction among Pakistani students and teachers grows [8].

In their research article, Manzoor and Abid (2015) stated that there will be special economic zones for specific places in Pakistan, which will benefit the average man as well [8]. CPEC will help to create more than two million work opportunities, either directly or indirectly. It will be beneficial for both countries to have face-to-face contact [8].

Magsi and Taj [9] have conducted a study on "China –Pakistan Educational and Cultural Cooperation Under BRI", where they stated, by adopting a socio-economic approach by collecting data through secondary sources (research journals, documentaries, newspapers, magazines, news channels, published interviews, and survey reports. They collected different themes out of data collection. One idea that was extracted was the Chinese language and the other idea was educational cooperation. Magsi and Taj concede that "the Chinese language is replacing the English language for jobs which are being created under CPEC". Moreover, "The educational cooperation and exchanges between Pakistan and China are playing an important role in promoting the high-quality development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), [9].

Spanish universities are looking for creative methods to work with other countries to provide international training. In order to foster virtual interactions between Spanish and Canadian students, the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM) in Spain and the University of British Columbia, Okanagan (UBCO) in Canada have partnered to offer opportunities for international collaboration and study. A model for long-term innovation in language and cultural engagement, the Language Exchange Program between UPM and UBCO allows students to engage in communicative activities with native speakers. The Common European Framework of Languages' most recent methodological ideas is supported by this interdisciplinary project [6].

A study titled "A Language Exchange Program: Sustainability Innovation in Language and Culture Engagement" was carried out in 2013 by Fernandez et al [6]. The three domains of sustainability that they introduced were environmental, social, and economic. The preliminary results of two virtual exchange programs, which promote cooperative work and cross-cultural interchange while offering venue-independent learning modes, were presented in this report [6]. Spanish universities introduced a language exchange program (LEP) that allowed students to learn more about the foreign language and culture they were studying. Students were confronted with

different language tasks related to writing and speaking dealing with everyday situations, the description of emblematic sites and buildings, or career prospects, so the Australian students revised and corrected the Spanish students' writing assignments in English, and the Spanish students correct and give feedback to the Australian students in Spanish [6].

Students received conversational experience and confidence in conversing in English or Spanish, and their language abilities have been maintained or enhanced. Furthermore, they created a sense of learning community: people with similar beliefs that actively learn from one another [6].

Pakistan and China have been promoting each other language for a long time but after the CPEC agreement, the dire need for each other's language learning is coming ahead. For this purpose Pakistan's Govt. has sent 500 students from Pakistan to China on scholarship for two years. This journey lasted in 2017. These students are working as language trainers, translators, researchers, and, demonstrators in different universities in Pakistan. But this number is very low. CPEC is being considered a game changer [10], for Pakistan given the boom in its economy but the language barrier is still there. There is a dire need to increase the number of language professionals which can be increased through language exchange programs like the previous venture which lasted in 2017. No new language endeavors are being captured and a big full stop is still there. The study holds the attitudes and perceptions of those students who have remained part of that language exchange venture in China since 2017. This study is an attempt to enhance the importance of LEPs which should be increased and regulated by the Govt. of Pakistan to prepare more students as language professionals in the Chinese language, who could cover the long route of CPEC.

No considerable research has been found to impart the attitudes and perceptions of those students who participated in LEPs from 2017 to 2019. PM Punjab Shahbaz Shareef spearheaded the project to send 500 students to China to learn Chinese. Students have signed an agreement with the government of Pakistan that they will serve in Pakistan for three years after completing this program. This program aimed to promote CPEC and bridge the language gap between the two countries. In terms of CPEC, both countries' languages must be understood. As Mr. PM Punjab Shahbaz Sharif (recent Prime Minister of Pakistan) said, "**After learning the Chinese language, the youth have to play the role of master trainers and added that a bright future awaits them**" [11].

From 2017 to 2019, those 500 students were sent in four batches. Those were the first Chinese language professionals to serve in various areas of CPEC and education, utilizing their language expertise. This unique study has presented the perceptions and attitudes of the selected participants towards the efficacy of the LEPs in the socio-economic development along with the CPEC regions.

III. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

Mixed-method Approach: A mixed-method research strategy is compatible with the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. By combining results from several data sources, this method strengthens the study's robustness and provides a more thorough and validated understanding of the research topics. While qualitative data gives the statistical results more nuance and context, quantitative data integrated into bar graphs makes trends and patterns easier to see and easier to explain.

The present study's methodology, which integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, was deliberately chosen to offer a thorough comprehension of the function of language exchange programs (LEPs) in promoting socio-economic development in the areas bordering the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This methodology's justification stems from the requirement for both quantitative data—which provide statistical insights—and qualitative data—which offer participants' nuanced narratives and in-depth viewpoints. The study is a mixed-method where quantitative survey and qualitative interviews were conducted. The quantitative electronic online survey is based on a questionnaire on a Likert scale comprising 19 questions. The survey findings helped to know the attitudes and perceptions of the participants towards LEPs and the role of LEPs in the socio-economic development of the CPEC regions. For qualitative data collection, 15 participants were selected for interviews to triangulate the study.

Quantitative Surveys: A relatively large sample of 98 participants' data was systematically collected through the use of quantitative surveys using closed-ended questions. Consistency in responses is guaranteed by the surveys' organized format, which makes it easier to produce numerical data that can be statistically examined. This methodology is especially advantageous in evaluating participant satisfaction rates, attitudes, and perceptions regarding different facets of language exchange programs. It offers a quantitative basis for evaluating the overall efficacy of the program.

Qualitative Interviews: By capturing the depth of participants' experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives, the addition of qualitative interviews enhances the survey results. The interviews' open-ended format enables a more

thorough examination of the socioeconomic effects and cultural consequences of LEPs. Finding subtle insights, providing a more comprehensive knowledge of participants' travels, and contextualizing statistical findings are all made possible by qualitative data. It promotes a more thorough and nuanced analysis of the data by enabling the investigation of themes and variables that the researchers had not previously discovered.

The students, who remained part of the LEP in terms of the Chinese Language Scholarship Program by the Punjab Govt. from 2017 to 2019, were the population of the current study. This research has an emphasis on the successful LEPs from 2017 to 2019. The population of the study encases 98 students among those 500 who had been sent to China for LEP from 2017 to 2019 in four batches. For quantitative data collection, random sampling was used from the 500 students who joined that particular LEP. Moreover, for qualitative data collection, purposive sampling was employed in interviews with them, 15 participants were interviewed.

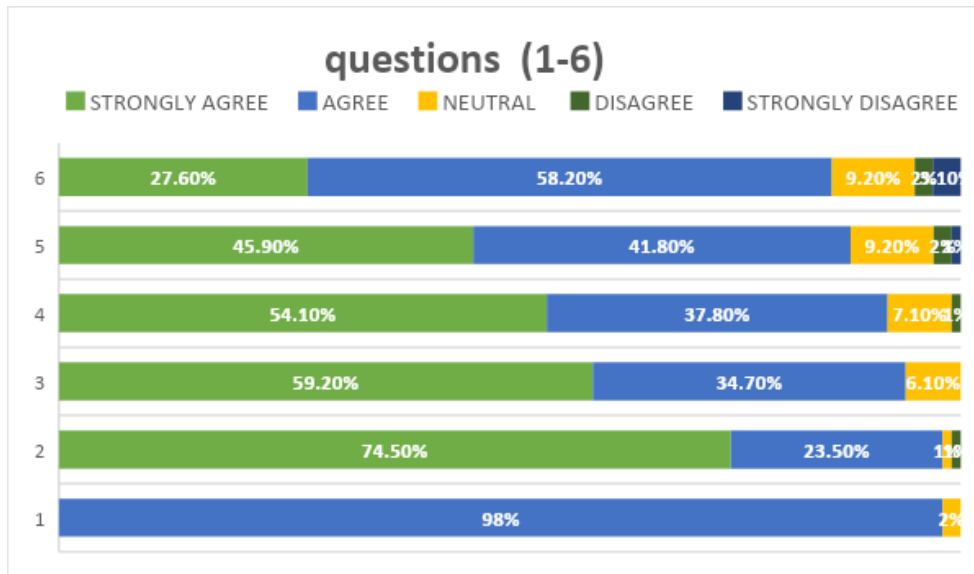
IV. RESULTS

Quantitative Data Analysis

98 students who attended the particular LEP in China participated in this study. Their selected options demonstrated their attitudes and perceptions regarding LEPs and their effectiveness in the socio-economic development in the CPEC regions. These participants are working in different areas and educational institutions so their inclinations toward the significance, effectiveness, and positivity towards LEPs are considerable. The results are presented in bar graphs. 4 bar graphs have been established to show the data in percentage.

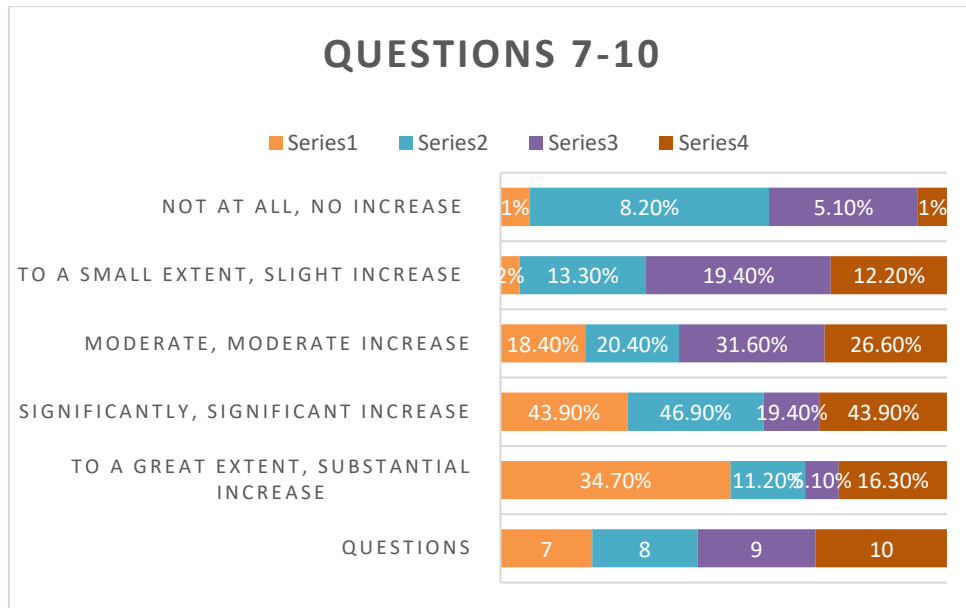
As was mentioned in the methodology section the close-ended online questionnaire comprises 19 question statements, so the results have been shown through bar graphs.

Prominent aspects have been highlighted in this questionnaire: effectiveness of the LEP in terms of improving language skills, enhancement of cultural understanding, having the potential to contribute to socio-economic development in the CPEC regions, improving job and business opportunities (raising income, and generating revenues), etc.



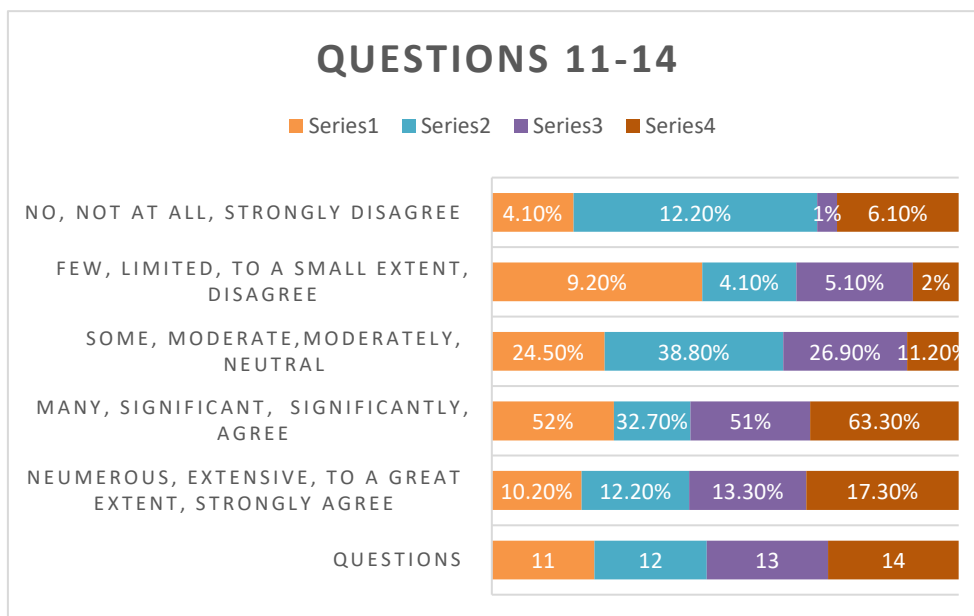
Bar Graph. 1

In bar graph 1 (questions 1-6) an assessment of a language exchange initiative in China indicates that participants have favorable opinions. A 98% satisfaction rate highlights the program's success in helping participants improve their Chinese language skills and shows significant approval for the program's design and teaching methods. Furthermore, a substantial portion of participants (59.2%) said that language exchange programs can support economic development in CPEC locations, and the majority of participants (74.5%) strongly agreed that the program improved their awareness of other cultures. Moreover, a significant proportion (54.1%) strongly concurred that acquiring language abilities via these programs enhanced their employment opportunities, indicating a perceived connection between language competency and career advancement. With 45.9% strongly agreeing, it is clear that language exchange programs improve inter-communal cooperation and communication. Regarding the long-term socio-economic impact of these programs, participants were also hopeful, with 58.2% and 27.6% strongly agreeing. A tiny portion, nevertheless, indicated neutrality or disagreement with some components, highlighting the necessity for additional research to address issues and improve program design.



Bar Graph. 2

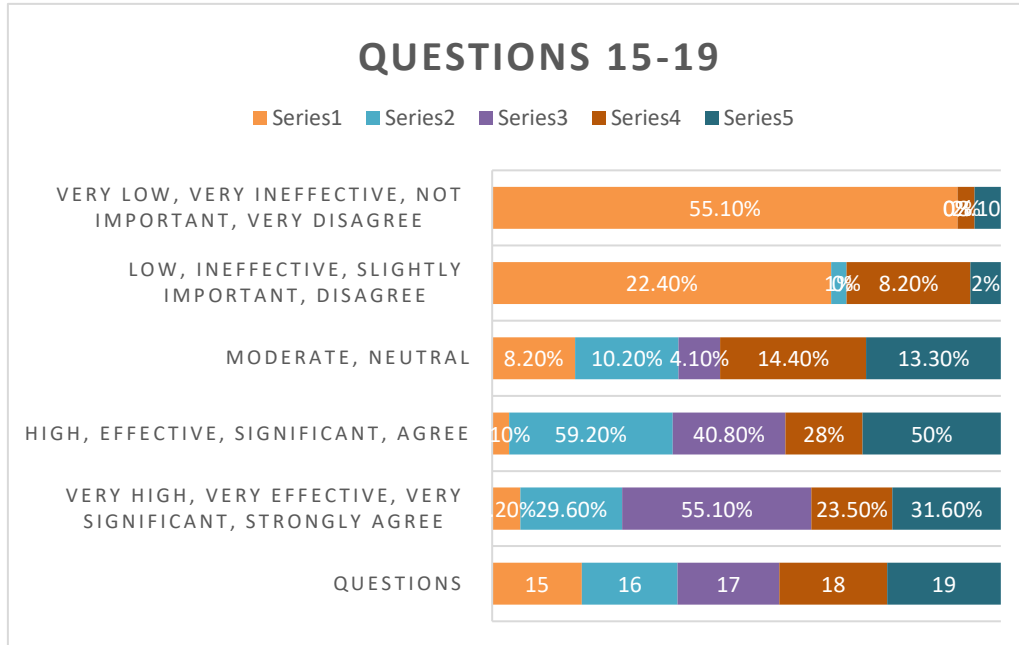
The survey's findings shed light on, in bar graph 2 (questions 7-10) how language exchange initiatives are seen in CPEC areas. A huge majority of participants indicate great gains from improved language abilities, and participants generally acknowledge the positive influence that these skills have had on their current employment or enterprises. Notable are the financial results as well; most participants in the program reported higher incomes or improved business revenue. Furthermore, a significant segment notes favorable outcomes for international commerce and commercial prospects in CPEC areas, underscoring the financial significance of language exchange programs. Furthermore, as indicated by the majority of participants, these initiatives play a vital role in facilitating partnerships and collaborations between local communities and international organizations. This is highlighted by the poll. The issue primarily centers on the various advantages that language exchange programs have for collaborative, professional, and financial elements in the context of CPEC regions.



Bar Graph. 3

The information displayed in Bar Graph 3 (questions 11-14) pertains to the experiences and opinions of language exchange program participants, with particular attention paid to the effects these programs have on the long-term socio-economic development of CPEC regions, social cohesiveness, company expansion, and employment prospects. The majority of participants indicated that they had secured numerous new work chances, which is a strong positive influence on professional growth. Similarly, business owners noted that their companies have significantly expanded into foreign markets, highlighting the significance of language exchange initiatives on a

worldwide scale. The majority of participants also thought that these initiatives had a large positive impact on CPEC regions' social cohesion and intercommunal understanding. A little proportion, meanwhile, voiced doubts over the long-term influence on socioeconomic advancement, indicating the need for more research and development in the communication of the enduring advantages of language exchange programs. The subject as a whole focuses on the various benefits that language exchange programs offer, including social harmony, business growth, professional advancement, and the possibility of long-term regional development.



Bar Graph. 4

In bar graph 4 (15-19) Before engaging in the language exchange program, participants' levels of Chinese proficiency varied, with the majority describing their competence as extremely low (55.1%). The majority (59.2%) rated their proficiency as high after the session, indicating a considerable gain in language abilities. This suggests that the program was successful in improving language skills. Positive assessments were given to the program's overall efficacy, with 40.8% and 55.1% respectively deeming it to be effective and extremely effective. The majority felt that language exchange programs needed to be supported and funded going forward; 28% of respondents rated them as significant, and 23.5% as extremely significant, for the sustained development of CPEC districts. A majority of respondents (81.6%) indicated a positive tendency toward future involvement, with 50% agreeing and 31.6% strongly agreeing to take part in language exchange programs in the future to support the socio-economic development of CPEC regions. The results highlight the program's perceived effectiveness and the participants' desire to keep using language exchange programs to advance the development of the area.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data analysis, undertaken through a thematic analysis technique, gives a nuanced perspective of participants' experiences in language exchange programs within the context of CPEC. Using this method made it possible to pinpoint recurrent themes, codes, and patterns that captured the participants' rich and diverse answers.

Experience with Language Exchange Programs: A recurring trend in the data was the participants' generally positive reports of their experiences. The program's remarkable success in promoting cultural immersion beyond language instruction was made clear by the thematic analysis. Understanding Chinese practices, beliefs, and ways of life was a defining feature of this immersion and emerged as a major theme in the participant narratives.

Impact on Personal Growth: As a recurrent theme, the thematic analysis highlighted the importance of personal growth. The Chinese culture's emphasis on diligence and endurance became a narrative code that was weaved into the stories of the participants, improving their lives and advancing language learning.

Language Learning Environment: Through codes like learning from native speakers, practicing language in real-time in a variety of settings, and taking part in cultural activities, the immersive language learning environment—a major theme—was discovered. The experiential and practical aspects of language learning are highlighted by this theme.

Socio-Economic advantages: Thematic analysis revealed that a recurring theme in participant replies was socio-economic advantages. The socio-economic influence of language exchange programs was highlighted by concrete results such as involvement in CPEC projects, better job opportunities, and income production from small initiatives.

Efficient Usage of Resources and Regulations: The thematic analysis highlighted the importance of governmental regulations while identifying efficient resource usage as a subject. In order to optimize contributions in higher-level scenarios, participants frequently brought up the necessity of rules, emphasizing the function of regulatory frameworks in maximizing program outcomes.

Enhanced Communication and Cooperation: Thematic analysis showed the necessity of enhanced communication and cooperation as participants highlighted the growing demand for local interpreters in the presence of Chinese firms. One of the most important themes that has arisen for promoting deeper understanding and cooperation between various communities and stakeholders is language proficiency.

Effects Over Time and Durable Results: Divergent perspectives on sustainable outcomes surfaced as a theme, with participants seeing possible benefits nuanced by warnings. The theme emphasized how CPEC projects are dynamic and how long-term planning is essential for long-lasting impact.

Suggestions for Enhancing the Program: Thematic analysis revealed important suggestions as a main subject. The necessity of skill-based programs catered to individual competencies, efficient resource utilization, and the incorporation of terminology relevant to the profession were all stressed by the participants. A recurring element in the recommendations was the implementation of collaborative actions, such as the promotion of regional crafts and the creation of monitoring and evaluation systems.

Ultimately, the application of thematic analysis demonstrated the complexity and interdependence of the experiences, viewpoints, and suggestions made by the participants concerning language exchange programs under CPEC. This methodological approach offered a well-organized framework for identifying trends and identifying significant themes that support a comprehensive interpretation of the qualitative data.

V. DISCUSSION

The review of relevant research offers significant insights into the role that language exchange programs (LEPs) play in promoting language proficiency, cross-cultural understanding, and socioeconomic advancement. Our comprehension of the experiences inside the particular framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is further enhanced by the theme analysis of participant replies.

Language Exchange Programs and Skill Enhancement: Research has shown that language exchange programs are widely recognized to be beneficial for enhancing language proficiency, especially in speaking and listening. This is supported by the quantitative analysis, which shows that participants (98%) are very satisfied with their progress in developing their Chinese language skills. Language skills were greatly improved by the immersion experiences in addition to learning from native speakers.

Socio-Economic Impact of Language Exchange Programs: Language plays a critical role in socio-economic development, as the literature highlights. Participants acknowledged the socio-economic advantages of language exchange programs in the CPEC zones, according to a numerical analysis. Most (59.2%) said these programs may help with economic growth, and more than half (54.1%) thought there was a direct link between better job prospects and language competency. This is consistent with the idea that development requires good communication, which is made possible by language proficiency.

Language Exchange Programs and Cultural Understanding: The literature and data analysis both highlight cultural understanding as a major theme. Language exchange programs' immersion style helps participants get a greater understanding of the traditions and values of the host culture in addition to their language skills. It is believed that the participants' personal development depends heavily on this cultural enrichment.

Language Exchange Programs in the CPEC: Research indicates that English is largely responsible for the project's operationalization, even despite the language distinctions between Urdu and Chinese. On the other hand, there is a growing need for Chinese language experts. The increased prospects within the CPEC framework have led to participants showing a growing interest in learning Chinese, a tendency that data analysis validates.

Long-Term Effects and Sustainable Outputs: The literature and data analysis both highlight the subject of conflicting viewpoints regarding sustainable outcomes. Even though participants are positive about prospective benefits including job creation and technology transfer, they also voice reservations, highlighting the importance of long-term planning. This is consistent with the dynamic character of CPEC projects, demonstrating the need for flexible language exchange initiatives.

Suggestions for Improvement: Research shows that to promote economic development, language exchange programs must be successful. The qualitative analysis yields detailed suggestions from the participants, highlighting the significance of customized, skill-based programs, effective resource management, and cooperation. For a program to be effective, it is believed that practical instruction and vocabulary particular to the profession must be included.

Possibilities and Difficulties: As the research points out, language boundaries present several difficulties for the CPEC. Participants in the thematic qualitative analysis emphasized the need for more language specialists and a persistent effort to close the language gap, which is consistent with these concerns. Nonetheless, both sources make clear the advantages of CPEC, including the growth of businesses and the creation of jobs.

With a focus on participant experiences and the literature, the debate provides a thorough knowledge of how language exchange programs (LEPs) contribute to the socioeconomic development of CPEC regions. Policymakers, organizers of programs, and participants can all benefit from the insights gathered from both sources to improve the efficacy of language exchange initiatives in this particular setting. The thematic qualitative analysis's emphasis on interdependencies and complexities highlights the necessity of strategic planning and ongoing adaptation to optimize language exchange programs' long-term effects within the ever-changing context of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

VI. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the integration of quantitative data analysis, qualitative analysis, and literature evaluation has allowed for a full examination of language exchange programs (LEPs) inside the particular constraints of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This research sought to clarify how these programs affected language proficiency, cultural awareness, and socio-economic growth by utilizing both well-established studies and the many viewpoints that participants offered. The literature review emphasized the critical role language plays in promoting cultural understanding, easing communication, and propelling socio-economic growth. It recognized language exchange programs (LEPs) as useful instruments for improving language proficiency and fostering cross-cultural interaction, which was in line with the recurrent themes that thematic analysis revealed.

The results of the qualitative analysis demonstrated the overwhelmingly positive experiences of the participants, underscoring the immersive character of language exchange programs that improved language ability while also fostering a deeper understanding of local culture. Themes such as diligence and perseverance in Chinese culture resonated highly, strengthening the literature's understanding of language as a catalyst for socio-economic growth [4].

These qualitative findings were enhanced by quantitative data analysis, which provided statistical support. The program's effectiveness in improving participants' Chinese language ability was highlighted by the exceptionally high participant satisfaction rate of 98%. The program's beneficial effects on socioeconomic development, career possibilities, and effectiveness were also highlighted by the quantitative findings of the participants.

In the particular setting of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), language exchange programs are essential for bridging language gaps between Mandarin and Urdu speakers. The literature and the participants underscored the growing need for professionals with competence in the Chinese language, highlighting the critical role that language ability plays in collaboration and efficient communication throughout CPEC projects.

Long-term effects and sustainable outcomes were discussed, taking into account information from both qualitative and quantitative studies. The literature and participants acknowledged the necessity for smart, flexible planning to ensure long-term socio-economic development, which countered optimism about prospective benefits.

The statement "**After learning the Chinese language, the youth have to play the role of master trainers, and added that a bright future awaits them**" [11] by Mr. PM Punjab Shahbaz Sharif (recent Prime Minister, Pakistan) resonates and adds weight to the issue. This view corresponds with the study's broader findings, emphasizing the transformative potential of language exchange programs, not just in linguistic abilities but in empowering the youth as future leaders and contributors to the socio-economic development of CPEC districts.

Actionable advice for policymakers and program organizers is provided by the participant recommendations, quantitative findings, and insight from Mr. PM Punjab Shahbaz Sharif. These suggestions highlight the value of customized, skill-based programs, effective resource management, and cooperative efforts, highlighting the necessity of ongoing adaptation to satisfy the changing requirements of CPEC projects.

It indicates that the study successfully addresses the specified goals and inquiries. The study aims to investigate participants' attitudes and beliefs regarding the influence of language exchange initiatives on socio-economic development, while also emphasizing the role these programs play in promoting socio-economic understanding and

appreciation in CPEC regions. The research topics, which focus on the contribution of language exchange programs to the promotion of socioeconomic awareness and the attitudes and views of participants on their influence on socioeconomic development in CPEC regions, clearly align with these aims.

In conclusion, under the unique framework of CPEC, language exchange programs (LEPs) seem to be effective accelerators for linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic growth. The viewpoint of Mr. PM Punjab Shahbaz Sharif is included to further enhance the conversation, emphasizing the youth's capacity to become expert trainers and make a substantial contribution to the CPEC regions' future. In addition to providing helpful suggestions for maximizing the effectiveness of language exchange programs in the ever-changing context of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the study advances our understanding of the intricate interactions among language, culture, and development. Strategic investments in language exchange programs can promote long-term growth and collaboration in the regions along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, as language continues to be a fundamental component of understanding and communication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We thank Nawal Fatima, Jawaria Afzaal, and Dr. Shafaq Fayyaz for their contributions to this work. Special thanks to China Study Center NUST for their assistance and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan for financial support.

FUNDING STATEMENT

We express our gratitude to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for their financial support provided to the China Study Center, NUST, which has made the publication of this research possible. This assistance has been invaluable in advancing our academic and research goals.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is **no conflict of interest.**

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