

## **Print Media Portraying Pak-China Education Collaboration Through Soft Power lens**

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The study examines the connection between Pakistan and China in education through an evaluation of print media. The purpose is to discover how Pakistani media portray the relationship between Pakistan and China from a soft-power perspective. The *Down*, *News and Educationists*, three press outlets, have been followed (2010-2019). The data was divided into four streams. Pakistani students moving to China to study in China are included. The second wave studied publications citing Chinese schooling news in Pakistan. In the third flow, the researcher examined articles on the movement of Pakistani education into China. In the fourth flow, the researcher looked at articles on how China improves its education system, policies, and what Pakistan may learn. China and Pakistan have partnered in research and technology, according to the article. The Chinese Government supports Chinese education through several bursaries and bourses and the introduction of numerous technology-based programs for Pakistani students. This study evaluated how China used Soft power to promote Pakistan-China relations and how the print media depicted it.

**Keywords:** soft power, media, *The Dawn*, *The News*, *The Educationist*, Pak-China education collaboration,

China has deepened its economic connections with Pakistan through conversations over the routes and projects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor that were focused on the elite (CPEC) (Ahmed, Hanif, & He, 2021). China has cultivated ties with Pakistani players in the energy, media, and education sectors beyond the country's political leaders. Attractive incentives in both the Chinese and Pakistani markets are encouraging the growth of mutually beneficial relationships between the two countries' performing arts communities. Due to China's status as a rising global power and the promise of future economic gains, a growing number of Pakistanis are deciding to learn Mandarin and study abroad in China. The push pressures offered by Chinese government efforts are encouraging Chinese actors to strengthen their links with many sectors of Pakistani culture (Afzaal, Hu, Iliya's Chishti, & Khan, 2019). In Pakistan, for instance, China supports and funds Confucius Institutes and classrooms all around the country, and offers scholarships to Pakistani students who wish to study in China. Chinese companies have expanded their operations in Pakistan and are working with local educational institutions to learn about and respect the country's unique culture, customs, and religious

beliefs. Chinese media outlets like Xinhua News Agency have partnered with their provincial Pakistani counterparts to hone in on the country's audience and shape public opinion on pressing international issues in line with Beijing's priorities. Chinese investment in Pakistan's electrical sector is also in line with the BRI's Go Global policy for Chinese SOEs, which encourages the growth and internationalization of Chinese businesses. Additionally, Beijing's authorities have employed more traditional forms of soft power, like as the promotion of popular culture, educational exchanges, media expansion, and the Chinese language (Hussain, Mehmood, & Saeed, 2017)..

The educational sector can now benefit from China and Pakistan's growing economic ties. China's key contributions to education in Pakistan and other developing nations are scholarships, vocational training, and Chinese language instruction. There is a growing need among young, middle-class Pakistanis to study Mandarin Chinese, and Confucius Institutes and classrooms are facilitating this goal by spreading the language and culture of China around the world. Increasingly, more people are considering studying in China since they believe it is one of the best places to do so. China's enhanced support has led to a dramatic rise in the number of scholarships offered to Pakistani students. There are a number of variables contributing to this increase in enrollment among Pakistani students, including a greater familiarity with Chinese higher education, cheaper Chinese universities, and a greater belief in the value of Chinese degree programs (Ahmed, 2019).The bulk of China's educational aid to Pakistan and other developing nations go toward university scholarships, vocational training programs, and Chinese language classes.

It is the Chinese governments push factors and the pull factors of local circumstances in Pakistan that have led to these alliances. The belief that China would continue to push itself as a major world power and the expectation that closer connections with China will lead to future political and economic gains account for these pull factors on Pakistan's side. Many Pakistanis think that going to school in China or learning Mandarin will be better for their careers than going to school in the West. Due to all this number of urban Pakistanis studying Mandarin has increased dramatically across all educational levels, from middle schools and high schools to colleges and universities (Ahmed, Hanif, & He, 2021).

The Chinese scientific publication looks to have increased markedly as a major potential and signal for synergy in regional higher education. China now ranks second in worldwide science production indexes after the US (Adams, King, & Ma, 2009; UNESCO, 2010; Yang & Welch, 2011). China is also considered worldwide as an attractive partner because of its high-ranking colleges and increasing scientific research. China tends to boost its strategic soft power objectives by extensively investing in human resources and developing research-intensive schools (Yang, 2012). China is a fascinating place for international students to graduate from the USA and other industrialized countries. China has been an interesting place for overseas students to seek higher education after the U.S. and other wealthy countries. China gives international students favorable conditions such as scholarships for learning Mandarin and participating in other education initiatives (Yang, 2012).

During a state conference on foreign education held in Beijing in December 2014, China's current President Xi Jinping and Minister Li Keqiang, signed a memorandum of recruiting international students as a national strategy to strengthen soft power, and global competitiveness was emphasized. Today, 500,000 students are recruited in the "Study in China," making China the largest host country in Asia (Wen et al., 2018). Six thousand and fifty-six Pakistani students are now enrolled in Ph.D., Master, and Bachelor programs in China (The Express Tribune, April 14, 2019). According to a study conducted by Latief and Lefen (2018), the CSC scholarship program has a major impact on Pakistani students' economic, cultural, and social position and is happier than other international students.

Pakistani media have traditionally shown the relations between Pakistan and China in a favorable light, praising China for everything it has done for Pakistan. The deep bond between Pakistan and China has long been touted in Pakistani media (Rakisits, 2012). The media may impact public opinion and help implement national and international programs. The image of a state can be raised or damaged rapidly by the media. The function of the media is so vital that it can be the devil or the angel (Anshan, 2016). The media are vital in keeping people informed about global events. People in areas where people lack first-hand knowledge or information attract media messaging, but that does not mean that the media is telling us what to think. In addition, the media has a covert purpose in picking public attention to capture specific events for the viewers. As a result, less critique and public discussion limit the spectrum of public arguments on a particular subject (Happer & Philo, 2013).

### **Literature Review**

#### **History of China – Pakistan diplomatic relationships**

The acquaintances between Pakistan and China began in 1950 and increased in the late fifties and sixties (Zeb, 2014). The Bandung Conference in 1955 was the first attempt (Dobell, 1964). Pakistan has gone through a terrible phase, yet both countries have remained mutually supportive and maintained their bilateral relations. Pakistan helps break the isolation of China by bridging the gap between China and other Muslim nations. With time, both countries have been partners in many areas, including trade, defense, and energy, and have been a good example of friendship (Zeb, 2014). By giving technical support to enhance the country's infrastructure and upgrade existing facilities, China assisted the economic development of Pakistan. Recently, several energy-related projects in Pakistan have been inked. Countries also have joint military exercises and partners in the nuclear energy business (Paul, 2011).

Economic trade is one of the greatest markers and treasured by other countries of their friendship. Pak-China has entered into a free trade agreement aimed at boosting Chinese investment in Pakistan. China has invested in many development projects, including nuclear power plants, road building, copper mining, gold, and power generation. According to a World Economist poll, the Chinese Government invested between \$4 billion and \$15 billion, a considerable amount of money between 2007 and 2010 (The Economist, May 12, 2011). In this diplomatic engagement, Pakistan also provided several incentives to China. China has gained commercial access to Pakistani ports, market access, and cheap raw materials (Malik, 2017). Over the next two decades, Pakistan's

assistance to China will generate \$60 billion in transit fees. In addition to business, the emphasis on human relationships was placed on both countries. Pak-China recently launched programs and opportunities for researchers to work together to improve the quality of education. Through fellowships and internships, scholars and students were able to learn from each other. The Confucius Institute also strives to provide a venue where people can interact (Zeb, 2014).

### **Role of Education in Pak-China Relationship**

The Pak-China education relationship was initiated by the Confucius Institute in 2005 with the backing of China and the Confucius Institute headquarters (CII) to allow Pakistani students to study Chinese firsthand. In 2007, Islamabad NUML University created the first Confucius Institute (China, Org, Cn, 2007). This site seeks to promote Chinese as a language. According to a survey, the platform helped 4,000 students learn Chinese, and an online distance learning program was also launched. It is a characteristic of the Chinese soft power that a resolution to declare Chinese as an official language was offered in the Senate of Pakistan. Still, it was adopted later by the Senate Chairman that Chinese language training is needed for those involved in the CPEC project to bridge communications gaps and difficulties (Hussain & Mehmood, 2018). More students enroll in language programs and other graduate programs in China. A recent survey shows that 19000 Pakistani students are enrolled in different programs in China, and the number increases every year (Hassan, 2017).

Because of its lack of money and professional labs, Pakistan cannot provide high technology laboratories and research environments in education. High-end research is lacking in universities with fewer resources to access state-of-the-art technical facilities; but, when students are given a chance to study abroad, they thrive in research and development. This difference is bridged via the education corridor China-Pakistan. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and the Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) inked a MoU. From 2005 to 2009, the Chinese government reportedly funded 1000 teachers and scientists for Ph.D. and other training programs in China (HEC). Education collaboration between Pakistan and China is seen as a strategy to expand educational exchanges. President Xi Jinping signed an MOU with HEC at the National University of Modern Languages to discuss student and faculty exchanges. China has also established Confucius institutes in Pakistan's major cities. The NUML International Education Center (NICE) was also set up at the University of Xinjiang Normal, Urumqi. With this relationship, Pak-chin students will communicate their knowledge and culture in a welcoming worldwide environment (Hussain & Mehmood, 2018).

With the support of the Chinese Language & Culture University in Beijing and the Confucius Institute Headquarters, the Confucius Institute in Pakistan was created in 2005. The first confederous institute was founded in 2007 at NUML University Islamabad (China.Org. Cn, 2007). The platform is aimed at promoting Chinese as a national language. According to a poll, 4000 students learned Chinese on their platform and an online distance learning course. Chinese as an official language in Pakistan's Upper House is emblematic of China's soft power. However, the Senate President later stressed the significance of language training for people working in CPEC projects to bridge communication gaps and obstacles (Hussain & Mehmood, 2018).

### **Theorizing the Role of Education Exchange through the lens of Soft Power**

In 1990, Joseph Nye developed the phrase "soft power" to characterize the ability of a country to persuade others to achieve its objectives. According to Nye (2004), education and culture are the most efficient soft power to convince the host country to shape its foreign policy and values. He defines soft power as follows in his book "Soft Power":

*"Soft power is the ability of the cultural recognition and guides others to follow and this power stems from the attractiveness of the culture and sense of the value of a nation"* (Nye, 2004.p.14).

Soft power convinces other countries to alter their advantages and preferences according to this notion to accomplish the desired goals of this country. Soft power contrasts with hard power based on persuasion and not force, while hard power is based on military and economic strength. Soft power derives its attraction from the principles, culture, and foreign policies of a country. In current circumstances, political multi-polarization and economic globalization are the patterns of development around the world. The doctrine of soft power has a tremendous impact on political education and foreign policy in a country (Hongtao & Lin, 2017). Soft power in higher education is based on other countries' values, policies, and culture and the worldwide educational system's framework, which comprises socially appropriate regulations, institutions, and standards. Higher education is an important source of information and a cornerstone of society's integrity. Universities and colleges try to promote knowledge as a powerful speech (Amirbek & Ydyrys, 2014).

Countries are vying fiercely to adopt higher education innovations to fulfill the expectations of the high-tech sector. Colleges and institutes have attracted foreign talent as a result of the competition. "Global mind competition" is a hard fight. Following Europe, countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and other Eastern Asian countries have embraced higher education as a soft power instrument to drive their economies (Nye, 2005, p. 12). Soft power was drawn to countries of major economies like the United States, Germany, China, Russia, Turkey, and some other developed European countries, and a host of educational initiatives have been launched to attract young people from all over the world that is competent, innovative and talented. Soft power is a paradigm that shifts the world's perceptions, particularly those of other countries by great powers. These countries have given a premium to education for the first time in history and devoted special attention to it (Nye, 2004). Higher education is a key soft power instrument for attracting talent worldwide, such as overseas students, technical experts, intellectuals, and researchers. The consequence is that the soft power of each nation is exactly proportionate to the number of international students. Therefore more international students imply more promotion of soft power in the host country (Li, 2018). Higher education as a soft power instrument to shape national policies, values and culture is a global hot topic. The word was initially called "educational attractiveness and competitiveness" but is now gaining recognition in the global field of education due to its effectiveness and novelty. Finally, the objective of conceptualizing higher education soft power is to explore the reasons for the globalization of the internationalization of higher education. It is a two-way road; both host and host countries can profit from Soft Power in the long term through international higher education (Li, 2018). Scientific and academic exchanges play a key role in the theory of soft power. The U.S. is the world's

best example of motivating elite political countries and winning allies with student exchanges (Nye 2004). Soft power education provides host country long-term benefits; it is always praised, and students who have experienced the cultural value of the host country always push policy in a manner that never harms the host country Soft-power education (Amirbek & Ydyrys, 2014). Research findings on education as a tool for soft power suggest that quality of studies, social engagement with overseas students, and host country views toward immigration are major success factors. For example, there has been much scientific debate on China's soft power strategy that involves educational exports from China, mostly Confucius Institutes (Paradise, 2009 and Yang, 2010). The propagation of the Confucius Institute shows Chinese soft power achievements, yet these institutions have been severely influenced by national players' political and ideological concerns (He & Wilkins, 2019).

### **The Important Role of Media in Shaping Public Perception**

The media is heavily influenced by public opinion and societal viewpoints, a topic long debated and researched. People's perception of the outside world is influenced by the media's or newspapers' reporting on global events (Happer & Philo, 2013). Media has a meditative function to distribute news about politics and politics to reinforce messages to attract audiences and shape their conduct, particularly in connection with other kinds of institutional support (Van, 2014). The media acts as a vehicle for shaping public opinion in particular social groups and the public. Despite this, the media have been a crucial player in molding public opinion in North Africa and the Middle East for the past 150 years and have produced a terrific piece on hot topical topics. At the time, the media concentrated on popular opinion, whereas scholarly activities in the region received less attention (Deguilhem, & Claudot, 2012).

Media broadcasting offers unidirectional public information, i.e., it affects their audience but takes little (if any) input from them. Consequently, the broadcast media in a closed society focus more or less on popular opinions and attitudes. Science and technology have progressed rapidly and have created new platforms for spreading knowledge, such as computers, tablets, smartphones, and other convenient devices. These new technologies are used to distribute social media or the "we media" to the public opinion, which is influenced more or less by broadcast media, especially in secret societies. Through Twitter, Facebook, WeChat, and Microblog services, there are one-to-one and numerous communication developments. Everyone may express their ideas and publish information, which represents an important change in how information and opinions are distributed in the media (Fan & Pedrycz, 2017).

### **Method**

The researcher has examined three outlets from the past ten years, from 2010 to October 2019, including two daily publications (Dawn and the Express Tribune) and one weekly newspaper (The Educationist). Dawn is the first and most frequently read English newspaper. The country has had a journal record since independence and before independence. During the American Revolution, the break became a symbol of solidarity and faithfulness. Young people and students spoke in support of Pakistan's demand (Roger & long, 2009). Dawn has offices in different provinces of Pakistan, including

Sindh (Karachi), Punjab (Lahore), and Islamabad (the federal capital). According to a source, it circulates 109,000 on weekdays. It is a renowned international journal read by the most educated and privileged elite in the country, representing 11 percent (Shah, 2010). The News Tribune is the most popular newspaper, the only newspaper in the world to cooperate with the International New York Times. The main headquarters in Punjab (Lahore), PKK (Peshawar), and Islamabad, the capital, are in Sindh (Karachi) (Hayat & Wahab, 2014). The Educator is an educational newspaper that publishes news or issues relating to education worldwide, primarily in Pakistan and Asia, with the help of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan. It is available in print in all five Pakistani provinces as well as in English and Urdu online.

Print media, in particular the English press, which is considered the most reliable compared to social media in Pakistan, plays an important function in influencing public opinion. Politicians and Pakistan's most qualified people read English newspapers and rely on them for a detailed understanding of various issues. We found all articles in the three media covering education in the area of Pak-China. We used search criteria to find results on the coverage of the Pak-China Education Collaboration. The current study includes all publications, including education, China, Pakistan, schools, teachers, universities, scholarships, etc. We used the data mining application to collect and export the results to Excel for all the necessary items from search engines. To eliminate duplicate search results, data were purged. Search phrases not relevant to the study included, for example, CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor), as some news about education was combined with CPEC. We have chosen articles for quality analysis from three news outlets: Dawn, The News Tribune, and Educationist. Compared to the 'Educationist,' in the last decade from 2010 to 2019, Dawn and the News Tribune have published numerous articles. A total of 139 papers were found, with 70 published by Dawn, 60 by The News, and 9 by Educationist. Table 1 shows the increases in published articles found by the search over the last 10 years from 2010 to 2019 for the terms Pak-china Education collaboration in three outlets.

**Table 1**  
*Number of Articles, by outlet and year*

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Dawn	0	3	3	4	4	7	11	14	12	12	70
The News Tribune	2	7	2	4	1	6	6	12	11	9	60
Educationist	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	2	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>139</b>

**Media content analysis**

The study begins by presenting three different outlets' discussions individually. Then, in the final section, we aggregated the findings of the Pak-China educational collaboration via the prism of soft power. The greatest technique to investigate the dynamics of education reform and the relevance of insight is to use media content analysis. According to Green-Saraisky (2015), the media uses content framing and speaker representation to mediate public opinion. Mass media not only distributes

information but also helps create what constitutes our common social reality and pertinent hopes and future expectations. The mass media uses an information presentation technique that promotes causal interpretation patterns among the audience. Analyzing the underlying interpretation patterns in a population through media discussion is thus a successful strategy (Waldow, Takayama, & Sung, 2014). The employment of mass media as a soft power in education might help study the contextual and chronological elements of the discourse, behavior, policy, and partnership of two countries. Many comparison studies have utilized a content media analysis (Liu 2018). This study aimed at examining the contents of 139 publications. Two-level coding was established based on frame and voice ideas for an in-depth examination. These two analysis methods helped us understand how Pak-Chinese educational collaboration is presented in the media and shared with the public, and who was granted legitimacy and power to speak about Pak-Chinese learning collaboration and its relevance (Green-Saraisky, 2015).

### **Article-level analysis**

After a thorough review of all articles on three sites, the keywords and speaker representations that approximate the content size have been extracted. Different contents frames were coded after the media item had been examined. To illustrate the Pak-China educational relationship, I examined the different types of structure that the three channels use. Articles that follow the 'study abroad in China' structure usually provide an overview of education in China-wide and accessible. This category includes all media content related to cooperative research initiatives, fellowship programs, and Chinese degree programs. Content under Pakistan's 'Chinese education' category encompasses all Chinese programs in Pakistan, including Confucius programs, Chinese education, and universities. Media content frames collaborative programs between China and Pakistan, such as cultural exchange programs, bursaries, and research initiatives, equally beneficial to both countries. The 'Pak-China Education Partnership' is characterized as being half done in Pakistan and half in China. Media content that emphasizes challenges students encounter due to Chinese education or critical feedback on education quality deficiencies is classified as "Chinese education quality." Pakistani education articles in China are classified as 'Pak-education in China.' This contains all Pakistani language, literature, and study programs in China. Finally, opinions and ideas on reforms in education are categorized under the title 'Education policy reform' for schools, teachers, higher education, or policies.

### **Speaker-level content analysis**

To study how governmental bodies or policymakers use the media to promote educational partnerships between Pakistan and China. I examined which government bodies have their voice on the importance of Pak-China education collaboration in the debate. We coded every speaker's speech in each piece. Only remarks were included, which are directly quoted in articles and include citations or speeches paraphrased by reporters. The speeches were divided into 8 groups based on their position and role, and then the speeches of each speaker were coded. Speaker references were used to identify the legitimacy and authority of participants as well as imitation of media conventions, such as newspaper priorities and pragmatism (Green-Saraisky, 2015). We split the discourse into eight groups and directly and periphrastically categorized their quotations to understand the concept fully. The 'federal government' category includes all government bodies falling under this minister of education. The word "provincial



government" refers to government bodies, such as the minister of Sindh, hired by the provincial government. Professors, university vice-chancellors, deans, and leaders are the words "university professor." University administration, "Chinese Ambassador," the Rector of the University, incubates all Chinese government players who repent unexpectedly like the Chinese Ambassador. The teacher category includes all teachers or language teachers. The student category is self-explanatory. "Other" includes all actors not in the above categories, such as business people, private consultants, guests, etc. Dawn, News Tribune, and Educationists were chosen for their popularity, publicity, and discourse as three national media channels assessed in this study. These periodicals have an important influence on the elite, the general, and the educated public. Dawn, The News Tribune, and educational material are taken from their respective archives on the Internet. 70 articles published in Dawn, 60 pieces in The News Tribune, and nine in Educationist searching for the necessary articles from targeted data using the keywords 'study abroad in China' and other keyword variations. Articles published after October 26, 2019, get removed. In September 2011, Dawn published the first pieces, and in December 2010, The News Tribune.

**Results**

Figure 1 shows the growth trends of education partnerships between Pak and China over the previous ten years, which show an enormous increase in media reports. The total number of articles in three media outlets has constantly increased. There was a considerable increase in the number of papers published between 2015 and 2019. This has been made feasible by the projects inked between China and Pakistan. Political events have a major impact on media coverage. Increasing political coordination between the two countries takes place every year, with more media coverage. Dawn published more stories compared to The News and Educator.



Figure 1. Growth of Media Coverage of Chinese Education Collaborations in Pakistan, 2010–19. Sources: Dawn, The News Tribune and Educationist, Authors Compilation.

Table 2 shows how content framing has altered over time between 2010 and 2019. Initially, less than half (33.8%) of the news items have a strong and clear message on Chinese studies, while 25.8% highlighted Chinese education in Pakistan. In 24.4% of the articles, Pak-China educational collaboration was highlighted. 3.5% of articles criticize the quality of Chinese education. Only 6.4 percent of the content referred Pak-education in China. 5.7 percent of papers discussed the current situation of China's educational system, including how China reforms education, increases university ranks, and the country's education budget.

**Table 2***Content framing of Pak-china education collaboration, by time framing*

	2010-2013		2014-2016		2017-2019		Total	
	F/percentage		F/percentage		F/percentage		F/percentage	
Study abroad in china	10	40%	8	23.5%	29	36.25%	47	33.8%
Chinese education in Pak	10	40%	8	23.5%	18	22.5%	36	25.8%
Pak-China Edu collaboration	4	16%	13	38.2%	17	21.25%	34	24.4%
Quality of Chinese medical Edu	0	0%	3	8.8%	02	2.5%	5	3.5%
Pak-Edu in china	1	4%	1	2.9%	7	8.75 %	9	6.4%

Compare the differences between the framework content between the three media outlets in Table 3 to determine audience-specific framing tendencies. The Dawn Outlet published 30% of its pieces on the status of students in China overseas, the News Tribune 40%, and the Educationist 22.2%. Dawn publishes 30% of items connected to education, The News Tribune publishes 25%, and Educationist does not publish them. Dawn publishes 17.14 percent of Pakistan-China collaboration stories, 28.3 percent in the News Tribune, and 55.5 percent in Education. Only 7.15% of the content about quality of Chinese medical education articles was published in Dawn, neither in The News Tribune nor in Education. Dawn published 8.57% of Pakistani education articles in China, while The News Tribune published only 3.3%, and Educator published no articles. 7.14% of stories in Dawn outlet, 3.3% in the News Tribune, and 22.2% in Educationists discuss how China is strengthening its education system and what Pakistan can gain from China.

**Table 3***Content framing of Pak-china education collaboration, by Media Outlet*

	Dawn		The News Tribune		Express		The Educationist	
	Frequency/	%	Frequency/	%	Frequency/	%	Frequency/	%
Study abroad in china	21	30%	24	40%	2	22.2%		
Chinese education in Pak	21	30%	15	25%	0	0%		
Pak-China Edu collaboration	12	17.14%	17	28.3%	5	55.5%		
Quality of Chinese medical Edu	5	7.15%	0	0%	0	0%		
Pak-Edu in china	6	8.57%	2	3.3 %	0	0%		
Learn from china	5	7.14%	2	3.3%	2	22.2		
Total	70	100%	60	100%	9	100%		

Table 4 shows how media speakers in Pakistan and China talk over time regarding education. The article-level statistics are obtained from Dawn, the News Tribune, and the online archive archives of the educator, respectively. Search points include education in China, education partnership between Pakistan and China, and variations in these terms. Speakers have a voice of authority and authenticity, according to Green-Saraisky (2015), and the public listens to what they have to say. To document the use of education by Pakistani print media to communicate soft power to the general population. Initially, the speakers who talked about education partnerships between China

and Pakistan have become more and more diverse over time. For example, over the years 2010-2013, the representation of speakers was not uniformly split; students received 21.4 percent of all quotations, 18 percent from the provincial and university professors, and 18 percent from China's ambassador, administration, and teachers (11 percent). Between 2010 and 2013, less than 4% of all citations were received by the federal government and others. In the second term, 2014-2016, university professors received the largest number (29%), followed by students (21%), the provincial and administrative received 16%. During this timeframe, the Federal Government and others received the least quotations while teachers received none. During the period 2017-2019, the highest percentage of university professors (28%) were given citations compared to the rest of the speakers (17%), the Chinese ambassador (17%), federal government, and government (12.9%), while professors and others received the lowest percentage (5%) of the citations. Between 2010 and 2019, it was demonstrated that professors at universities obtained 46% of all quotes, the largest number among all speakers. The academics have received a minimum of eight citations in the last ten years. In the past 10 years, the quantity of quotations has consistently climbed for all speakers.

**Table 4**

*Speaker representation about education in Pak-China in media outlets by the time*

	2010-2013	2014-2016	2017-2019	Total
	Frequency/%	Frequency/%	Frequency/%	Frequency/%
Federal government	1 4%	2 5.2%	14 12.9 %	17
Provincial government	5 18%	6 16%	9 8.3 %	20
Chinese ambassadors	3 11%	4 10.5%	18 17%	25
Universities VC/prof	5 18%	11 29%	30 28%	46
Administration	3 11%	6 16%	14 13%	23
Students	6 21.4%	8 21%	12 11%	26
Teachers	3 11%	0 0%	05 5%	8
*Other	2 7.14%	1 2.6%	6 6%	9
Total	28 100%	38 100%	108 100%	174

Table 5 illustrates the presentation of the speaker split down by the media outlet. First, the Express Tribune more frequently quotes federal and provincial governments than Dawn and the Educationist. The News Tribune is a well-known publication for a wider readership of educators who see government officials as a dependable source of credibility. Furthermore, the speech representations of Dawn and The New Tribune varied little; both channels covered similar themes, but Dawn and Educationist diverge significantly from the News Tribune and the Educator. The educator emphasized more administration news than Dawn and The News Tribune, which is 38%. Dawn and The News have also been shown to pay more attention to lectures by university professors with 31% and 21% respectively.

**Table 5**

*Speaker representation of Pak-China education in media outlets*

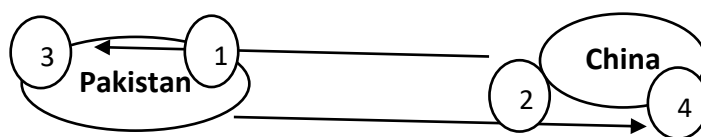
	<u>Dawn</u>		<u>The Express Tribune</u>		<u>The Educationist</u>	
	Frequency/%		Frequency/%		Frequency/%	
Federal government	4	4.5%	10	13.6%	3	23%

Provincial government	11	12.5%	9	12.3%	0	0%
Chinese ambassadors	13	14.7%	10	3.6%	2	15.3%
Universities VC/prof	28	31.8%	16	21.9%	2	15.3%
Administration	9	10.2%	9	12.3%	5	38.4%
Students	14	15.9%	12	16.4%	0	0%
Teachers	3	3.4%	5	6.8%	0	0%
*Other	6	6.8%	2	2.7%	1	7.6%
Total	88	100%	73	100%	13	100%

## Discussion

In this study, we examined all the data from a soft power perspective. According to Nye, education is the most effective soft power strategy to influence foreign policy (Nye, 2004). There was little research to understand the Pak-China Education Partnership in the context of soft power. The media are a mediating power that is a prism for the relationship between Pakistan and China. The media form and reflect public views. By examining the media talk of three Pakistani outlets, the study helps fill a hole in Pakistani literature. This study's major goal is to examine how the media mediated Pak-China education through soft power and how both nations participated.

As a consequence, the researcher split the data into four flows. In the first flux, we concentrated all the articles about studying abroad in China, leading Pakistani students to China for higher education. In the second flow, news reports about Chinese education in Pakistan, especially the Chinese education movement in Pakistan, were examined. We have analyzed the expansion of Pakistani literature to China in the third flow. In the fourth flux, articles discussing the quality of Chinese education were reviewed, how China improved its education system, what policies it adopted, and what Pakistan could learn from China in this area.



### Dawn coverage

In 2010-2019, Dawn authored 70 articles. Dawn has more articles in Pakistan on Chinese schooling. China is Pakistan's good buddy. China has invested heavily in the various domains of health and business education. Pakistani students earned generous Chinese bursaries due to the Silk Road. In addition, China has a lot of investment in education. The Confucius Institute is the best example. China also invests in technological education

*An agreement had been signed with the PML-N Punjab Government that the company would invest two percent of its net profit on development projects. The Corporate Social Responsibility Agreement and Technical Training Agreement was signed between Huaneng Shandong Ruyi (HSR) and the Punjab government in June 2017.*

(01.7. DawnAug, 9)

*“The role of CCLS is to promote exchanges with Wuhan University to teach Chinese law courses, conduct training seminars, and attend conferences and symposia on the Chinese legal system. By building academic capacity to study and teach courses in Chinese law through CCLS, both countries stand to gain as our ties are strengthened through CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative.”*

*(01.12. DawnOct, 26)*

This partnership between the two universities will benefit students and scholars and both countries and their joint endeavors. Pakistan and China reaffirmed their resolve to cooperate in the education sector to strengthen their bilateral strategic cooperation. China is dedicated to helping Pakistan strengthen its education system through funding and grants. Both Parties stated that Pakistan was supported to strengthen the industry, education, and socio-economic sectors of the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The Confucius Institute continues to attract an increasing number of students in Pakistan.

*“Pakistani students are very sharp and learn Mandarin in a short amount of time. Mandarin is not difficult for those who want to learn it,”*  
*(01.28. DawnMay16)*

Dawn has published a total of 20 papers on Chinese studies. It was noted that Dawn outlet deals more fully with the movement of students from Pakistan to China. Dawn released various works on the knowledge of students' advantages of studying abroad in China. In China, the number of Pakistani students is expanding steadily. They are doing well in the realm of research. Dawn published the following article, for example:

*“A series of preferential policies drafted by the Chinese government for students from these countries have contributed to the remarkable rise in their numbers, including offering 10,000 places each year for students from countries along the Belt and Road Initiative to study in China under the support of the Chinese Government Scholarship”.*

*(01.25. DawnMarch2)*

*“Studying in China seems to be one of the better things to do for those seeking foreign education. There are many takers in Corporate Pakistan today for those having exposure to a distinct language and culture”.*  
*(01.1. Dawn Feb, 8)*

The Chinese Government encourages Chinese students to attend Chinese institutions with several awards. It appears that studying in China has been the 'cool' thing lately, according to one report. Shanghai, Beijing, and Hong Kong are the most popular study destinations outside of the country. And all of them have one thing in common Mandarin, Chinese.

Dawn published 11 articles about the Pakistan-China partnership in the realm of education. This flow covers all quotes on Chinese education in Pakistan and Pakistani education in China. For example, exchange or training programs that benefit both countries. The cooperation between Sindh and Chinese universities is one example.

*“The governor praised Dr. Mohammad Ali Shaikh, vice-chancellor of the Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU), for engaging Chinese universities and establishing the students` exchange program that he said was the first such link in the history of Pakistan. `It is good to know that Sindh has taken lead in establishing contacts with the universities in Hainan province of China, ` he said”.*  
(01.39. Dawn. April, 5th)

A unique academic partnership between Sindh and Hainan was established through the Sindh-Hainan Universities Forum (S.H.) The province government and universities of Hainan also granted scholarships to Pakistani students.

*“NUML had found that the people of Baluchistan were quite eager to learn the Chinese language so that they could land jobs and other opportunities.”*

(01.41. Dawn. August, 8)

In collaboration with Xinjiang University, the NUML International Center for Education built the China-Pakistan Joint Cotton Bio-Tech Laboratory. The China Culture Center was also formed in Pakistan. Dawn featured two articles on Pakistani schooling in China. The NUML and Xingjian Standard University have inked an agreement to set new standards in higher education. Both universities have planned to create NICE (NUML International Center for Education) in China.

*“Rector NUML retired Maj-Gen Masood Hasan emphasized the need for such agreements that can bring a considerable change in the education sector. He also praised the institutions on both sides. The spokesman said that agreements will offer a base for the people of Pakistan as well as the people of China to cooperate in the field of education”.*

(01.51. Dawn. April 23, 2015)

The Chinese and Pakistani Science and Technology Ministries constructed the Chinese-Pakistan Joint Cotton Biotech Laboratory. At the same time, NUML and Xinjiang University worked together to set up the NUML International Education Centre. The China Culture Center in Pakistan was also founded.

Dawn published two articles in China about Pakistani schooling. The NUML and Xingjian Normal University have forged an agreement to work together to develop new high school standards. Both universities will establish NICE (NUML International Center for Education) in China.

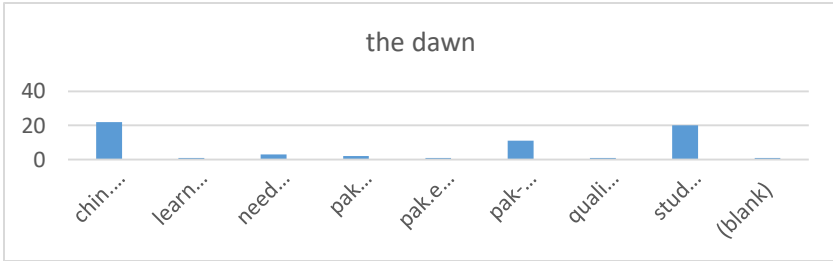
*“Urdu may be a bit more challenging than other languages, but a growing number of Chinese students are choosing to learn the vernacular anticipating opportunities to be offered by Chinese companies carrying out development projects in Pakistan under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)”.*

(01.31. Dawn. June, 11.2017)

*“The Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) has been teaching Urdu since 2007 and till now two batches of its students have*

*completed their degrees in the discipline, Head of Urdu Department at the School of Asian and African Studies Zhou Yuan said in an interview”.*

(01.31. DawnJune, 11.2017)



**The Express Tribune**

The express tribune produced 60 articles over the ten years from 2010 to 2019. More tales have been published about studying in China. It described Pakistani students' educational migration to China. Twenty-five works on the topic in China have been published in the Express. Compared to the other two outlets, more articles have been published. For instance,

*Pakistan ranks third in the number of international students currently studying in China with 28,023 students, according to a statement issued by China’s Ministry of Education. (01.8. Dawn August 30, 2019)*

Pakistanis are China's third-largest overseas student community. Official data show that China has been Pakistani students' highest educational destination, with approximately 7,034 studying bursaries in Chinese universities. Following the opening of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CCEC), a Belt and Road Initiative pilot project, Pakistani students in China grew due to the Chinese government's several good measures. 6,156 Pakistani students have completed Ph.D. programs in China, 3,600 have completed Master programs, 11,100 have received Bachelor and 3,000 have completed Short Term Exchange Programs. Pakistani students also study Chinese, engineering, medical, I.T., and several other fields of study.

16 works on Pak-China educational collaboration were published in the express tribune and 15 articles on Chinese education in Pakistan. Several instances are provided here: cooperation and 15 articles on Chinese education in Pakistan. Examples include:

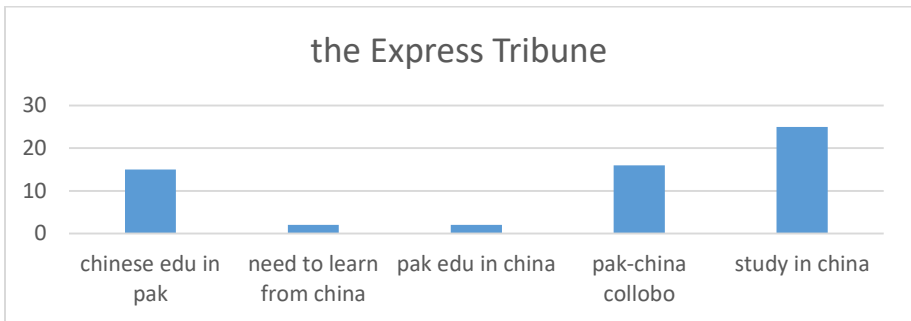
*“UN-Chinese Language Day,” Yao Jing said the promotion of the Chinese language in Pakistan is a new stage of cooperation between the two countries since language is the most important means for communication, cooperation, and connectivity. “In China, eight universities are working to promote the Urdu language and 12 Pakistan-study centers working to promote the mutual understanding between the two countries”. (01.36. Dawn September 5, 2018)*

The Pakistan-China Institute, a local think tank, worked in the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) in Islamabad to foster bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. There are 12 study centers in Pakistan in China.

*A group of seven Chinese students will soon leave for Islamabad to participate in a six-month-long training program to further improve their Urdu language skills. (02.89. The Exp. August 27, 2018)*

*The ministry of overseas Pakistanis and human resource development has decided to teach the Chinese language at the schools run by the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) while it mulls over the formation of the youth council, comprising children of the Pakistani citizens living abroad. (02.71. The Exp. April 2, 2019).*

People of Pakistan are eagerly learning the Chinese language because of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects. “The OPF asked to make the Chinese language mandatory at all its schools. Students are also interested to learn the language from the beginning.



### The Educationist

The Educationist is an educational publication that provides topics important to the educational area. Nine papers were published between 2016 and 2010. It has published five pieces on education partnerships between Pakistan and China, five papers on China study, and just two articles on Chinese educational policies, which Pakistan should learn to develop its education system. There are a few instances below.

*“Higher Education Commission and Huawei for successfully conducting this ICT competition for students. Roadshow and workshops were held in 53 universities and academic institutions across Pakistan. More than 5000 students attended the examination conducted on Huawei’s learning platform. Top 300 students were invited to attend the second round, of which 171 students passed HCNA Certification”.*

(02.131. The Edu. April 5, 2019)

China has gained a reputation as a global leader in the technology field and producing a bulk of research every year. China and Pakistan have engaged in the field of



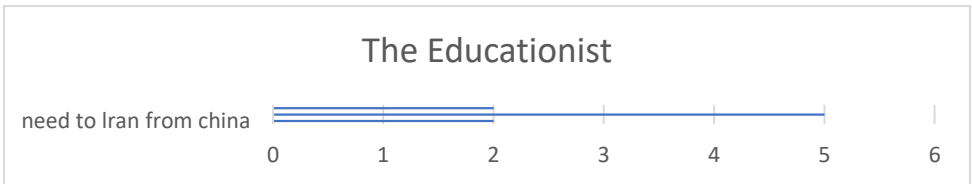
research and technology. China has established several technology-enabling programs to empower Pakistani students.

*A delegation from various technological companies of China called on Punjab University Vice-Chancellor. The delegation visited the Institute of Chemical Engineering & Technology where Prof Dr. Taqi Zahid Butt briefed them.*  
 (02. 131. The Edu. April 5, 2018)

*Islamabad: (September 6, 2018): The China Road & Bridge Corporation (CRBC) scholarships for Pakistani students under Inherit of Pak-China Friendship, Hundred Talent Study Financing Program will help strengthen China-Pakistan relations.*  
 (02. 132. The Edu. June 2, 2019)

Most of the students from Pakistan came to China to study Masters in Transport Engineering, Structural Engineering, Geo-technology, Railways, Bridges, and Tunnel, among other topics. Students who were chosen based on merit through a fair selection process attended the ceremony. CPEC is a major push for engineers and I.T. experts, and UET is various Chinese colleges.

In recent years, engineers have played a crucial role in CPEC, and this gap has been created and filled in conjunction with Chinese organizations. Several Pakistani institutions within the CPEC are associated with several Chinese colleges.



**Conclusion**

The media shows a lot about building and spreading public conversation and awareness (Liu, 2019). The Pak-China educational partnership’s timing, intensity, and tone on three independent print media outlets in Pakistan are remarkable. Dawn newspaper usually offers a partnership of high intensity with a broad range of materials that are more exposed than others. The alliance was also enthusiastically supported by the two other channels. In Pakistan, critics have uncovered three sources of information on medical education. Most students who obtain their MBBS in China must take a certification examination in Pakistan (PMDC). However, concerns and reform arguments are more widespread when it comes to difficulties for students. This research showed that media reporting in hierarchical experiments could play an important role in preparing local policy studies for horizontal transmission. Public discussion and mood can be influenced by retention (or release), problems (or simplification) of media in numerous social domains, and diverse demographic groupings. The results demonstrate that Dawn is an important way of legitimizing and disseminating information from Pakistan’s

collaboration on education to the broader population in Pakistan. When two countries discuss their political connections, research reveals that government officials' views are more often referred to as sources of legitimacy for professionals in education, which can support the state's core role in setting essential policies. Green-Saraisky (2015) provides a background for these findings by showing the considerable and genuine sources of a comparable reporting pattern by government officials in the United States. A deeper study of the relationship between media reporting and reform agendas is needed.

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