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The Confucius Institute and Cross-Cultural Communication Approach to Soft Power in Nepal

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Abstract

Discussions of soft power in recent years have paid a growing amount of attention to international politics. In particular, both Nepal and China have given great importance to cultural exchanges based on Confucius Institutes, which help deepen mutual understanding between the two nations and promote cultural cooperation between Kathmandu and China. This paper utilizes the cultural communication approach to examine China's soft power policies in Nepal through the Confucius Institute, highlighting Nye's concept of 'the power of attraction to a state based on its culture, political values, and foreign policies.' Based on the qualitative narrative analysis, China's concentrated efforts to use soft power diplomacy in Nepal have been a great success, with large investments in culture, education, and tourism. Countries executing the Confucius Institute not only spread the cultural value of CI host countries but also exchange their diverse values and traditions through the language reciprocally.

Keywords

Soft power, Confucius Institute, Nepal-China relationship, Language, Cross-cultural communication.

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2

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1. Introduction

The Chinese government presents the 'Beijing Consensus' (Ramo, 2004), referring to the model of rapid economic development in China, in stark contrast to the 'Washington Consensus' (Williamson 1989) and its neoliberal economic principles to the world. In today's time, global powers, including the Chinese government, believe that soft power is an important factor in shaping the country's image, not only for the government but also for regions, organizations, and individuals. The Chinese government has actively promoted Chinese culture as a crucial component for international exploration, aiming to attract other countries worldwide. In 2004, the Chinese Language Council International, also known as Hanban, a non-governmental and nonprofit organization associated with the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, initiated a significant campaign to advance the "Confucius Institute" (CI) project worldwide, serving as a platform for Chinese language programs. The recent revival of Confucianism and the rapid establishment of Confucius Institutes (CIs) around the world are considered part of China's soft power and foreign policy (Lahtinen, 2015). China has been shaping its 'backyard', i.e., attracting South Asian countries into its policies (Ba, 2003). Political analysts argue that the revival of Confucianism and establishment of Confucius Institutes around the world is China's most convenient gateway to world expansion, much like the American application of the Monroe Doctrine throughout North America (Milestone Documents, 2022).

Control and influence over South Asia have been a long-standing goal for many regional and global powers due to its strategic assets, such as economically significant waterways that facilitate 60% of international maritime trade transitions (Schrag, 2024). Researchers have detected underwater gas fields containing 290 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and the oceans contribute approximately one-tenth of the world's annual fish catch (Kurlantzick, 2015). Despite China's

geographical proximity, it remained closed to the outside world until the 1990s, allowing the United States, India, Japan, and South Korea to exert significant influence in the region. However, under paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, 1989 represented a watershed moment in China's modernization and repositioning as a worldwide economic powerhouse. With the establishment of the "*good neighborliness and friendship' plan, China began to deliberately enhance relations with neighboring countries as part of its new 'open door' policy for economic growth*" (Ba, 2003). Even today, diplomatic and economic relations play an important role in China's foreign policy. According to Stromseth (2019), China is utilizing a shared focus on U.S. trade and its control over the region, with the aim of ensuring domestic and regional stability, promoting economic development, and balancing U.S. influence in the region by focusing on the foundations of a "*community with a shared future*". Through this new relationship, Beijing has no doubt that cooperation from regional neighbors will make China's economy sustainable, develop, and lay the foundations for future economic growth.

The relationship between Nepal and the People's Republic of China is deep-rooted and has a long history. Nepal-China relations have always been friendly and cordial. Since the times of Nepalese monk and scholar Buddha Bhadra (early 5th century), Princess Bhrikuti (first half of 7th century), and Araniko (Anige, second half of 13th century), the relationship has existed since ancient times between the two countries, and the bilateral relations continue to develop in many aspects, like education and culture, even today (Shrestha, 2015). And early visits by Chinese monks and scholars, such as Fa Xian (Jin Dynasty), Xuan Zang (Tang Dynasty), etc., consolidated the relationship as two-way and cordial. However, formal and modern relations between the two countries started on August 1, 1955, with the establishment of diplomatic relations. The relationship between the two countries is characterized by friendship, understanding, mutual assistance, cooperation, and respect for each other's sensitivities. The two countries strongly believe in the ideals of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. As mutual friends and close neighbors, Nepal and China have a lot in common in terms of culture and food. Bilateral relations between Nepal and China encompass not only political and official exchanges, but also cultural exchanges such as the exchange of religion, language, and education. These exchanges also occur through various projects and programs, such as the Confucius Institute.

China established the Confucius Institute (CI) in 2007 to project its soft power in Nepal through language and education. The practice and study of cultural communication involves understanding how various cultures interact both verbally and nonverbally within their communities. Inter-cultural and cross-cultural communication are other terms for cultural communication. This paper aims to address this question: How would the Confucius Institute help China and Nepal boost cultural interaction and exchanges? The main discussion of the paper is that both China and Nepal place great importance on cultural exchanges, which are based on the aims and policies of the Confucius Institute. These exchanges aid in deepening mutual understanding between the people of both nations and promoting cultural cooperation.

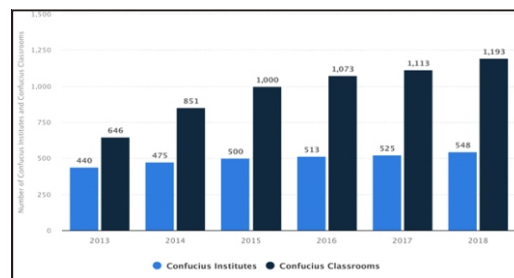
2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing the archival/documentary method for its execution. We collect the information for this archival/documentary research from various storage systems such as libraries, research journals, and the Internet. This approach concentrates on scrutinizing previously published texts in various media. We studied and interpreted the collected facts from the study in a detailed and in-depth manner to reach conclusions. We have designed this research to conduct a qualitative study of its subject matter. We have used data from primary and secondary sources to guide this study towards a plausible conclusion. We collected the narrative data by speaking with various personnel from political, bureaucratic, teaching, and university professor backgrounds. Furthermore, the study relies on text-based materials sourced from the internet, which are readily available and free of cost. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative approaches involve three steps in data analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The researcher has selected a conceptual framework, sites, research questions, and data collection approaches for data reduction. The reduced data has enhanced the researcher's understanding, facilitating the next step in data collection. In most cases, data display in qualitative research involves presenting the data as a narrative text. We collected numerous data related to the study from primary and secondary sources, and then conducted inductive analysis and interpretation. We employed qualitative data analysis to prepare and organize the data. Next, we reduced the organized data and presented it in a narrative form.

3. Confucius Institute: World and Nepal Overview

The Confucius Institute is a non-profit-making institution that promotes Chinese language and culture around the world. China intends to gain international understanding and goodwill at the same time that it establishes and grows the official organ for promoting Chinese language and culture (cited Lay, 2007). China's traditional culture has always been a source of attraction, and on this basis, with the goal of "planning together, building together, and benefitting together", Chinese and international partner institutions will have established 548 Confucius Institutes and 1193 Confucius Classrooms by the end of 2019 (see Figure-1). These institutions have been continuously meeting the demand of people all over the world to learn Chinese and comprehend Chinese culture. They are a leading brand in international Chinese education because they have served 155 countries and regions worldwide. China has become the third largest host in the world for international students. The number of foreign students enrolled in China rose from thirty-six thousand a decade ago to at least two hundred forty thousand in 2009 and five hundred thousand in 2018 (Wen and Hu, 2023). It shows China is the most popular country in Asia for international students, the leading destination for English-speaking African students worldwide, and the second most popular educational powerhouse in the world. But growing political pressure and scrutiny surrounding Confucius Institutes have led to the closure of some of them (Girard, 2023). China intends to gain international understanding and goodwill at the same time that it establishes and grows the official organ for promoting Chinese language and culture. People view the global expansion of Confucius Institutes favorably, viewing it as an opportunity for countries to comprehend the emerging power and potentially establish significant partnerships with the Chinese people (Tan, 2016).

Figure-1: Growth Chart of Confucius Institutes in the World in Different Years (2013-2018)



Source: Statista, 2019.

Currently, three Confucius institutes are running in Nepal. Among them, Hebei University of Economics and Business cooperated with Kathmandu University to establish the first Confucius Institute in Nepal in 2007. The Confucius Institute provides Chinese language teaching services to Chinese language teachers, provides resources for Chinese language teaching, manages the HSK test (Chinese Proficiency Test), provides information and consulting services on Chinese education, culture, and other fields, and engages in Chinese and foreign language exchange activities. Despite limited resources, a lack of professional institutions, and a shortage of teachers and textbooks, the Confucius Institute at Kathmandu University, now in its 10th year of establishment, continues to contribute to the learning of Chinese language, deep understanding of Chinese culture, and response to it. Furthermore, during Chinese President Xi's visit to Nepal in 2019, East China University of Technology and Qinghai National University of China signed a deal with Tribhuvan University of Nepal to establish another Confucius Institute in March 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic delayed its implementation at TU (Confucius Institute, 2024).

China is exploring its power in culture, education, and politics throughout South Asia through the organization of multiple cultures, festivals, education fairs, and workshops and seminars to educate and influence the new generation of the Nepalese population. When students study abroad through scholarship programs and spend time in courses, their exposure to different cultures, eating habits, and interpersonal interactions plays a significant role in positively influencing them and forming a positive outlook towards their host country. The courses, teaching methods, thesis themes, and environment foster a sense of belonging to a specific place, aligning perfectly with the ideals of the soft power strategy and serving as a model of soft educational power. Numerous studies have examined China's soft power projection, focusing on its objectives, nature, features, developments, challenges, and problems in various regions where Confucius Institutes are located or operate. But there have been few studies in Nepal, lacking in-depth analysis of the soft power approach of China regarding the Confucius Institute and its role in soft power effectiveness in Nepal, which is also a gap in this field. The study will employ Joseph Nye's theory of soft power and his tripartite approaches, which rely on legitimate agenda setting, persuasion, the

attractiveness of values, and the 'impression of kindness, competence' (Nye, 2021), within the context of the Confucius Institute in Nepal.

4. Cultural Communication and Soft Power

The concept of culture encompasses both the aesthetic, symbolic, and linguistic expressions of human beings, as well as the systematic ways of life observed within communities or organizations. UNESCO's World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico in 1982 highlighted the global significance of cultural matters. This event broadly defined culture as 'the entire range of unique spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional characteristics' that define a society or social group. This definition encompasses '*ways of life, basic human rights, value systems, traditions, and beliefs*' (UNESCO, 1982: 1). There is a connection between communication and culture. Through communication, people reveal their identities one to another. Similar to words, people use symbols in communication to convey messages to others. Kurylo (2013) asserts that symbols enable the representation or construction of culture through both verbal and nonverbal communication. Scholars (Zhu, 2016; Holmes, 2017; Merkin, 2017; Monaghan, 2020) have asserted that inter-cultural communication can occur between different communities, cultures, nations, or groups within or beyond a single country. Cultural communication shows how people from different cultural backgrounds can effectively communicate by comparing, contrasting, and examining the consequences of the differences in their communication patterns. However, communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds can present challenges, surprises, and re-learning due to the differences in languages, values, and protocols. Contextual barriers, such as language and noise, can impede communication by distorting, blocking, or altering the meaning (Aririguzoh, 2022). So, verbal or non-verbal language is a prominent ingredient in cultural communication.

The importance of soft power has exponentially increased in today's modern world due to the growing emphasis on culture, policy, winning people's hearts, people-to-people approaches to international politics, and relational aspects. Joseph Nye first proposed the concept of soft power in his book 'Bound to Lead', which aimed to explain and predict the continuation of American hegemony during the 1980s national decline (Nye, 1991). The

foundation of his soft power theory stems from his dissatisfaction with the emphasis on hard power in today's contemporary world, which he attributes to public-centric perceptions. Soft power has emerged as a new tool for achieving global international diplomacy objectives. In the original concept, soft power was defined as selective behavioral power, meaning 'getting others to want what you want.' Unlike the 'hard power' of military or economic power, soft power appeals to a state through its culture, values, policies, and institutions. It manifests as a nation's ability to gain geopolitical pull through its cultural values and ideals (Nye 2004: 11,, 2008: 96). Indicators of soft power include reputation, influence, political, cultural, foreign policy, corporate, cultural, digital values, governance, involvement, and education. Theoretically, soft power stems from the appeal of a particular culture, the attractiveness of a nation's domestic political and social values, and the legitimacy, credibility, and substance of its foreign policies, as perceived by others, rather than through coercion or punishment (Nye, 2005).

Although similar concepts had already been discussed in other disciplines like Weber's authority, Foucault's disciplinary power, Habermas' communicative power, Gramsci's hegemony, and Bourdieu's symbolic power, the international political scholars had paid little to no attention to non-material aspects of power, today known to us as 'soft power'. The power of ideas and norms has now penetrated mainstream international politics, and international relations has come to recognize its significance. The concept of soft power has provided a fresh perspective on previously unexplored aspects of international relations that do not involve fear, coercion, or violence, in stark contrast to the concept of 'hard power', which involves these elements.

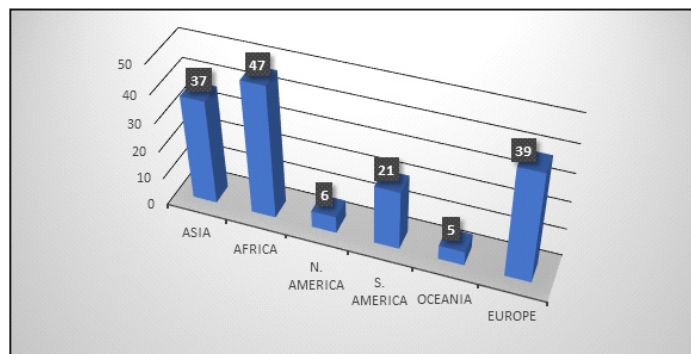
Cultural communication is characterized by a soft form of attachment, where emotions, apathy, values, and culture shape the relationship between individuals. A community executes its commitments and activities by utilizing symbolic resources, such as language and other forms of communication, unrestricted by politics or other forms of coercion. One of the prominent soft power tools is the culture and value of society in different nations. Indeed, it can be argued that China's Confucius Institute significantly enhances cultural interactions and exchanges, fosters mutual understanding, and promotes respect for differences among people. This theoretical framework has aided the research in understanding China's soft

power strategy in Nepal, specifically focusing on the Confucius Institute and the role of language in soft power. The framework has validated the research objectives and facilitated the analysis of CI's cultural communication approach to soft power in Nepal, an area that remains unexplored. The results of the study can shed light on the dilemmas and difficulties seen in the development of China's soft power in Nepal and other small neighboring countries by providing a more systematic and integrated framework.

5. Confucius Institute and Cultural Communication

Diverse cultures prioritize distinct values, which can create challenges in cross-cultural communication when individuals do not share the same perspective on a specific value. This is where language plays a crucial role in mitigating these difficulties. Language can be a powerful tool to promote a greater understanding between different cultures. Therefore, the Chinese network of the Confucius Institute is formed to support Chinese soft power strategies globally with the Chinese language in different cultural communities in the world. On November 21, 2004, Seoul, South Korea, established the first Confucius Institute. Today, there are 556 Confucius Institutes spread across 155 countries and six continents (see figure-2). Through affiliated branches, often organized by host universities and colleges such as Kathmandu University, Tribhuvan University, and LRI School in Nepal, the Confucius Institute promotes Chinese culture internationally. The Chinese Language Council and Chinese government institutions, such as the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Trade, and the State Council Information Office, regulate this and provide history and culture-focused teaching materials and curriculum.

Figure-2: Confucius Institute Across the World 2024



Source: Confucius Institute (2024b) Hanban

At present, the concept of “soft power” has risen exponentially in the fields of international relations and diplomacy. Research, studies, and public debates highlight the significance of soft power in today’s global politics. About three decades ago, Joseph Nye introduced the concept, which immediately captured the attention of leading decision-makers worldwide, particularly those in the U.S., and has continued to do so even more than before. When soft power is effective, it allows states, regardless of their strength, to make their own decisions by following or mimicking the actions of others (Hanh 2018). Soft power has become a tool in international diplomacy and communication for many developed nations around the globe. Soft power stresses the ability to achieve outcomes through attraction or a positive image rather than coercion or payments (Cho and Jeong, 2008). One of the examples of such attraction is culture and language. Soft power has a co-optive dimension, which means getting other people to agree to what you want through soft power resources such as cultural attraction, ideology, and international institutions. Cooperative power is ‘the ability of a country to develop preferences for other countries to develop preferences or to define their interests in harmony with its own’ (Nye, 2008: 167).

The exchange of ideas, values, traditions, and aspects of culture, including language, are some of the examples of cultural diplomacy. These exchanges help strengthen relations with other countries and thus improve social and cultural cooperation among them. Lee Kuan Yew, a former senior leader of Singapore, once stated that other nations achieve soft power when they admire and aspire to emulate aspects of that nation’s civilization (Gill and Huang, 2006: 26). China’s concentrated efforts to use soft power diplomacy in Nepal have been a success with large investments in religion, education, and tourism. People envision a future for Nepal that favors China on nearly all fronts: economy, culture, and region. CI gives the language an unprecedented role in globalization, facilitating access to English-language popular culture, literature, history, and religious and philosophical traditions (Crystal, 2003).

Despite the limited historical and direct cultural links between Nepal and China, soft power strategies have proven effective at both the people-to-people and government levels in Nepal. However, there are still geographical limitations and socio-cultural restrictions, like language barriers, between the two countries as compared with the geographical and socio-cultural roots between Nepal and India.

Although there has been a shift towards the north, it may take some time for China's soft power attraction to fully penetrate Nepal. History has shown that the Chinese language has played an important role in promoting Chinese nationalism and Chinese cultural identity. The potential for rising Chinese soft power to revive strong Chinese cultural sentiments and pride is a matter of great interest. Chinese people have also absorbed Nepali culture, values, and emotions simultaneously.

The Confucius Institute at Kathmandu University held an elementary Chinese class in association with Jyapu Samaj in March 2024. The Jayap Samaj is a community organization belonging to one of Nepal's indigenous peoples, the Newar, which is one of the oldest ethnic groups in Nepal with a long history and its own cultural tradition. Mr. Tirtha Lal Maharjan, chairman of the Jyapu Samaj, emphasized that Chinese language learners are increasing in Nepal in recent years, which has not only enriched the life of the community but also given the opportunity to have diverse knowledge of international culture. He hoped that the students would cherish this opportunity to learn Chinese and strive for success, which would enhance the friendship between China and Nepal.

The primary risk in cross-cultural communication between two countries is distortion, which creates misunderstanding or even misrepresentation of the conveyed information. Following the exploration of the Chinese language in Nepal by the Confucius institutes, numerous Nepalese students and skilled orators gained an understanding of the specific values of China, as well as the historical aspects of Chinese people who have worked for mutual honor. Not only did they receive information in the Chinese language, but it also played a crucial role in disseminating information about the host country, preventing cross-cultural misunderstandings between the two countries' communities. Recognizing the influence of culture on individuals and how these individuals in turn impact society is crucial for a skilled communicator (Aririguzoh, 2022). Essentially, communication plays a significant role in shaping the global landscape. Hence, employing suitable communication tactics can facilitate the harmonious integration of diverse cultures.

6. CI's Soft Power in Nepal

The CI at Kathmandu University (KU) has 4 Confucius classrooms and 14 teaching sites and has trained a total of more than

50,000 students (Xinhua, 2023). The university has made significant progress in establishing good cooperative relations with other universities, expanding teaching venues, standardizing management systems, and improving teaching levels and influence. In addition to private and public schools and their students, the Chinese embassy in Nepal has initiated language courses for Nepalese officials. As a Nepalese joint secretary at the Ministry of Education told us, Nepal has a lot to learn from China in sectors like technology, education systems, culture, trade, and tourism. Since language is the only way to learn about these areas, we felt it was necessary to first train our officials in knowledge and technology transfer. Therefore, the soft power concept serves as a valuable tool for comprehending the role and proliferation of CIs. Chinese authorities believe that if foreigners understand more about China and Chinese society, then they will be more friendly and accommodating to China's interests (Ngamsang, 2013). Exchange of culture and language to promote diplomacy and influence other countries is effective because, according to Nye, "*values are central to soft power: soft power rests on some shared values*". That is why exchanges are often more effective than mere broadcasting.

During the celebration of the 10th establishment ceremony of CI, Vice President of Hebei University of Economics and Business Gao Xiaofeng said, 'The institute has not only opened Chinese language courses at universities, colleges, and primary and secondary schools in Nepal but also has launched other programs, including Chinese classes for the Nepal Army and government officials.' In addition, Bhola Thapa, vice chancellor of KU, said, "*The Confucius Institute not just teaches language but is a part of cultural exchanges. We're proud that we have been part of this exchange through the institute at our university*" (10 July, 2023, Xinhua net). Furthermore, Lili Juo, the program coordinator of one school, stated that China's influence is significantly improving. This improvement has positively impacted the concept of understanding China and encouraged many Nepalese to assimilate the Chinese culture, study in China, and visit China following the implementation of CI in Nepal. Similarly, a junior graduate of CI, Shreyana Shrestha, said that CI doesn't just learn the Chinese language; it's learning a lot of other skills as well, such as communication skills and social skills.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of CI in Tribhuvan University in 2022, the then Minister for Education, Science, and

Technology (MoEST) of Nepal, Devendra Paudel, expressed the importance of the Chinese language and listed it as an optional course for students from grades nine to 12 starting this year. He asserted that CI can help elevate the relationship between the two countries through language teaching, cultural exchanges, bilateral cooperation, and mutual understanding (2022, August 16, Xinhua net). In addition, Leela Mani Paudel, former ambassador of Nepal to China, says, *'The Chinese language has become very necessary for Nepal's economic and social development, investment, tourism, and higher education.'* Additionally, Wang Xin, the political counselor at the Chinese embassy in Nepal, collaborates with the Nepalese government and individuals from various backgrounds to jointly implement the Global Civilization Initiative, aiming to enhance the Chinese language learning environment for Nepali friends. The graduates have been contributing manpower to Nepal's tourism, infrastructure, business, and trade sectors in particular.

The economic and trade relations between China and Nepal are becoming closer and closer; the demand for recruits who can speak Chinese in Nepal is increasing. Therefore, the Confucius Institute in Nepal possesses significant potential to serve as a crucial component of China's soft power strategy. Since the concept of soft power holds no power dynamics, it encompasses a wide range of forms and dimensions. Among these dimensions, language holds a significant place. The world system continues to maintain language's dominance as an integral part of cultural communication. Language is not just a combination of words. The relationship between society and human beings has evolved into a network of behavior and goal-oriented experience, and through accurate transmission, we can find solutions to problems that neither force nor wealth can solve.

7. Findings and Conclusion

This study examined the rationale behind the opening of the Confucius Institute at the universities in Nepal and its role within an institution of higher education, diplomacy, language planning, and development. Nepalese policymakers hope that a competent group of Nepalese with Chinese language skills will be able to engage with Chinese people and Chinese-owned companies on the ground in Nepal. Chinese diplomats use the CI to show that China wants to build meaningful ties with the Nepalese people by sharing its culture. The Institute has supported the Chinese government in

pursuing its political and economic concerns in Nepal. From China's perspective, the promotion of its language has implications that extend beyond cultural exchanges. It serves as a diplomatic strategy to enhance its reputation, contribute to the cultural diffusion of Chinese language and culture, and position itself as a trustworthy alternative to the West for neighboring peoples.

The soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority). China's traditional culture has been a source of attraction, building on which it has created several hundred Confucius Institutes around the world to teach its language and culture, including in Nepal. China's concentrated efforts to use soft power diplomacy in Nepal-with large investments in culture, education, and tourism-have been successful at high tables, institutionalizing relationships between government elites.

The agreement between the two countries to establish yet another Confucius Institute at Tribhuvan University after Kathmandu University and mobilize teachers in public and private schools has proved that the attraction of culture as a soft power strategy in Nepal is a success. We have made significant progress in establishing good cooperative relations with other universities, expanding teaching venues, standardizing management systems, and improving teaching levels and influence. It is not only a language institute that promotes language proficiency, but it also provides cultural exploration for individuals seeking to navigate the global world order in contemporary international politics. In history, China had a significant position in civilization, trade, and other aspects, and currently no one can exclude China from the world political landscape because of her economy, strategy, culture, and civilization.

Therefore, through the China Institute (CI), newcomers and freshers can effectively compete with other political powers based on their actual knowledge. It will not only present China to other countries, but also provide a means for them to learn about China through their own natural language proficiency. Through inter-cultural communication, China has enhanced its potential to "liberate" Chinese culture from its traditional geographical and linguistic boundaries, opening up a network of Chinese culture (its

philosophy, history, and literature, for example) to its neighbors and the world. In return, it will facilitate the exchange of cultural values, notions, and diversities between Nepal and China, thereby enhancing bilateral relations through an organic form of communication marked by notable understanding. Also, it spreads the small language culture and other activities in a broader horizon.

Alexander (2004: 113) asserts that those involved in language policy often overlook its influence. Nevertheless, Nepal's language planning policy in higher education has played a role in establishing connections with China from an institutional aspect. As a result, students in Nepal now have the opportunity to benefit from China's economic growth. We cannot overstate the importance of aligning public and cultural diplomacy with modern communication dynamics. Emphasizing horizontal, many-to-many relationships and network exchanges over traditional one-to-many mass communication approaches is crucial in today's digital age. This shift toward engaging audiences in a more interactive and participatory way marks a significant departure from the past strategies of targeting passive audiences. The study concludes that China has achieved huge success in establishing soft power policy by founding CI in Nepal and thereby promoting cross-cultural communication through linguistic discursivity.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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