

The Promotion Of American Culture Within Mainland China: A Research Article From The Perspective Of Non-Chinese Citizens

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Abstract:

This research was conducted on behalf of the Department of Culture and Tourism of Guangdong Province and explores how American culture is promoted within China and how it impacts China's society. First, American beliefs and ideas were investigated to identify how they differ from Communism in China. Secondly, the similarities between China and the United States of America were studied to determine that comfort, money, and security for families, jobs, and businesses are handled quite equally by both cultures. The third objective was to examine the tension levels between the two countries brought on by the recent trade wars. The fourth section of the research analyzed the differences between collectivism and individualism and how these views influence non-Chinese citizens in China and the United States. The study identifies the truth of China and its citizens and how the level of appreciation towards American culture is important to the China. The analysis also sought to establish how the people of China honestly feel about the United States and its citizens. Lastly, the research was performed by conducting several questionnaire surveys in person with individuals in Guangdong, China and Pennsylvania, USA. The main results recognized that while American culture is highly appreciated within China, the citizens still prefer and honor the ways of collectivism that the Chinese government is built on. Furthermore, it was also determined that American culture is essential to many citizens of China due to the benefits of bringing the two countries together through music, Hollywood movies, products, and education standards. The recommendation is to proceed with the promotion of American culture within China as this will continue to bring the two countries closer together. Lastly, promoting American culture within China benefits young Chinese citizens due to the exposure of collectivism and individualism, which will enhance their knowledge of economics.

Background: *Culture determines the beliefs, emotional and behavioral levels of individuals. Culture can be defined and expressed through art, customs, law, morals, religion, and other habits or capabilities. American culture is known widely on a global scale. Many citizens of China appreciate and promote American culture. From music, education, clothing, fashion style, decorations, and advertisements, American culture impacts China.*

Materials and Methods: *In order to complete the study, the researcher used a mixed method analysis. Five group surveys using qualitative questionnaires were completed by participants, and one survey was performed using a quantitative observation by the researcher. The research was completed between April 15, 2023 to August 3, 2023 while the author was physically located in Guangdong, China and Pennsylvania, USA.*

Results: *The findings of this research determined that American culture is commonly recognized and accepted within China. American culture is also important to the Chinese education system and for the advertisement of products, music, Hollywood movies and cross-cultural beliefs.*

Conclusion: *The analysis established that the citizens of China are fond of Americans. Promoting American culture within China is very popular and widely accepted throughout the PRC. If American citizens knew how Chinese citizens felt about American culture, the people of the USA would have a different outlook towards China.*

Key Words: *People's Republic of China (PRC); United States of America (USA); Culture; Collectivism; Individualism; Improve; Educate; Promote; Survey.*

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I. Introduction

Since the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949, the Chinese culture has been known to promote Collectivism, a process of group collective theory that people should own the means of production through Communism. When the United States of America was founded in 1776, Individualism was the main

focus taught within the majority of the schools from early education to higher education and within the homes of most American households. Many cultures worldwide do not support America's push for Individualism, especially within the last twenty years, due to the recent woke trend that has plagued the youths throughout America, which is now rapidly spreading globally.

It goes without saying that both the younger and older generations within Mainland China idolize American culture. If anyone has ever visited Mainland China, this statement can be backed by cinema, food, clothing, and other advertisements. However, within the last ten years, the idolizing of American culture has dropped significantly due to homosexuality, gender identity issues, and individuals being offended by almost anything or everything. Moreover, within the last ten years, especially the last five years, many Americans have been known to abuse the welfare system and not work due to the government issuing monthly payments for those who do not want to work; or simply put, being blatantly lazy.

The Chinese government and citizens of China are a proud group of people who honor and obey the Communist values instilled within the PRC and look down upon homosexuality, gender identity issues, feel that they are entitled to free things or hand-outs, and those who claim to be offended by almost anything. The majority of the citizens in China work hard to care for their families and pay their monthly bills.

This independent research will focus of the promotion on American culture within Mainland China from the Eastern Guangdong Province area, how to learn from the disadvantages of Individualism, solve problems within China without the issue spreading globally, tell the true story of China by surveying American's that live in China, and finally, report how many Chinese citizens honestly feel about the United States of America.

II. The Promotion of American Culture within Mainland China

Chinese and American people alike have several cultural similarities. Citizens from both countries are motivated by comfort, money, providing for their families, job satisfaction, and security (Diamond & Schell, 2019). While the United States of America (the USA) prefers fair competition with the PRC, both nations push for successful businesses so that people from both countries can enjoy security and prosper while protecting and sharing interests and values.

It is well known that the USA imports more from the PRC than any other country in the world, and it is also known that China is one of the largest exporters of goods and services from the USA (Wei, 2019). This trade has assisted the USA with lowering consumer prices and increasing corporations' profits. However, this act of business does come with costs.

Tensions have developed in recent years between the PRC and the USA due to new challenges related to economic issues. The trade tensions and the imposed tariffs have affected consumers and businesses in both countries. In a recently published news article as of 31 July 2023, it has been reported that the PRC could replace the USA as the world's biggest economy by 2035 (Xiaoyun, 2023). In order to reconcile differences between the PRC and the USA, the promotion of American culture within Mainland China does benefit America.

American-produced music has a large footprint within the PRC. From daycare centers to kindergartens, high schools, and universities; children, young adults, and even elders are attracted to the music created by American artists. In this day and age, music videos are viewable on smartphones, and these videos promote American culture, which advertises products. The Chinese citizens see the artists wearing fashionable items such as clothes, watches, hats, and shoes, or they see cars, food items, beverages, jewelry, etc., and, of course, people within China desire these commodities (Wei, 2019). Simply viewing a music video because someone enjoys a song can persuade a Chinese person to shop for mentioned items online. Doing so promotes American culture because the Chinese individual wants the item from a video they watched on the internet. With that being said, the item they will purchase from a social media platform will probably be manufactured within China. Therefore they are supporting the Chinese economy but ultimately falling for the promotion of American culture.

Another way American culture is promoted within the PRC is by means of watching movies at cinemas, on televisions, tablets, or smartphones. American Hollywood movies are known for their top-rated action-packed, suspenseful, romantic, and comical genres in the PRC and the USA (McKechnie & Zhou, 2015). By viewing American-made movies, Chinese citizens are offered a front-row seat in American culture through English grammar, accents, attitudes, personalities, how people treat others, and self-respect (McKechnie & Zhou, 2015). People should realize that fictional movies are for entertainment purposes; however, young Chinese adults and children may get the wrong idea from some American-made films and think it is okay to treat others unjustly. On the other hand, the promotion of deadly firearms from American culture can teach the youth of China that it is okay to inflict harm or death upon others.

Figure 1

Chinese and American Flags Flying in Unity. (iStock, 2023).



First Conducted Survey using a Qualitative Research Method:

A survey of five parents within Eastern Guangdong Province was conducted on 24 July 2023. These parents were American citizens residing in the Tianhe district of Guangzhou, Guangdong, and within the Longhua district of Shenzhen, Guangdong. Of these parents, one father is employed in the automotive electronics industry, another father works in the quality assurance industry that focuses on the export of Chinese furniture and the other three fathers are high school English teachers. One mother of these groups of parents operates a foreign Western style restaurant and the other four mothers are stay-at-home house wives.

First Survey Results:

Three of the five groups of parents stated that they are careful about the movies, cartoons, and television shows their children watch due to the violence and disrespect that is portrayed in American-produced films and shows. One group of parents stated that they preview all movies and shows their children watch to ensure their kids do not watch anything that may hinder their personalities, attitudes or possibly see guns being used. The last group of parents are strict and will not allow their children to watch American movies or shows because their kids are five and six years old. They do not want them exposed to homosexuality, gender identity issues, or become a participant in the newly woke and offended by everything movement that they claim is crippling the American youth. These five parents all stated that Chinese educational television shows and movies created for children are more appropriate for their kids because the content is more suitable for instilling values that focus on morals, values, family, proper education, and bringing communities together.

Valuable Lessons Learned from First Survey:

What America could learn from this particular survey is; what a child is exposed to at a young age determines who they become as an adult. The promotion of American culture should be limited at a young age and slowly introduced as they prosper in age instead of having access to all movies and shows at once from intelligent televisions, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, and computers. Parents should enforce viewing restrictions on these devices and closely monitor what their children are viewing because modern American culture allows children to view content that the PRC government would never allow a Chinese child to watch.

Figure 2

Chinese Citizen Promoting American Culture. (Cutout.pro, 2023).



Collectivism versus Individualism

American culture is based on Individualism, which emphasizes individual rights instead of placing the entire society above oneself. Collectivism is truly different, whereas the country, society, and family are based above oneself (Said, 2019). Collectivism stresses the importance of the community, which brings people together to support and care for one another. The people of China are known to unite and be selfless while honoring the valued traits of collectivist five-thousand-year-old culture. On the other hand, Individualism focuses on the rights and concerns of each citizen and personal identity to promote individualistic culture, better known as American culture.

For instance, an example of comparing the two cultures would be employees of an individualist culture would value their well-being over the good of the group. In contrast, a collectivist culture group of workers will sacrifice their comfort for the greater good of their team (Diamond & Schell, 2019).

Second Conducted Survey using a Qualitative Research Method:

A survey of ten Americans was conducted on 28 July 2023 within Eastern Guangdong Province that focused on Individualism and Collectivism. Three from the City of Huizhou, three from the City of Shenzhen, three from the City of Guangzhou, and one from the City of Dongguan. Chinese companies have employed all eight Americans for more than five years. Of these ten Americans, one is employed in the hotel industry, another in the tourism industry, one in the warehouse fulfillment industry and the remaining seven work in the education industry ranging from elementary to middle school and high school English teachers.

Second Survey Results:

All eight participants admitted that they prefer the employment of a Chinese company when compared to their old employers from the United States of America. Additionally, all eight Americans stated that Collectivism is easier to work under instead of fighting to be recognized as the best of the best, which contrasts with Individualism.

Third Conducted Survey using a Qualitative Research Method:

Another survey was conducted on three former Chinese citizens originally from Guangzhou, Guangdong, who became American citizens between 10 July to 12 July of 2023 while the researcher was physically in the state of Pennsylvania, in the City of Philadelphia. Of these three survey participants, one works in the pharmaceutical industry, another works in the financial management industry and the final individual is employed in the electric utility industry. American-based companies have employed all three Chinese Americans for more than fifteen years.

Third Survey Results:

Each of these three participants confirmed that their employers push Individualism and that while they are assigned duties as a group or a team, their coworkers do not work together but are more merciless or cut-throat. One person even admitted that their manager of nine years is well-known for taking credit for their work.

Valuable Lessons Learned from Third Survey:

The merciless and cut-throat personalities of coworkers in addition to managers taking the credit for work performed by other individuals happens to be known issues within companies in America. The researcher experienced this more than once while employed in the USA in the past, and there is even a saying for this type of action; "Survival of the fittest" or "Only the strong survive."

What is Best for the Youth of China?:

Within Mainland China, the culture pushed by the PRC within schools, society as a whole, and inside family households is to work together as a community for the good of all people. The author of this article can confirm that during their eight years of living in Mainland China, I have not experienced any cut-throat action from an employer. Even as a foreigner working in China, the managers and coworkers that I have dealt with have always been helpful and honest. On the contrary, the researcher experienced a vast amount of mercilessness from managers and coworkers during their twenty-plus years as a professional in America that was previously employed in the telecommunications industry. It goes without saying that this is part of the American culture, and I must route back to the two terms mentioned earlier, "Survival of the fittest" or "Only the strong survive."

By comparing the two different cultures of Collectivism and Individualism, the Chinese way of pushing Collectivism in education, society, and values is more honorable and loyal. The promotion of

American Individualism should not be taught or advertised within China, as this can truly harm China's future, let alone poison the minds of China's youth.

Figure 3
Collectivism vs. Individualism. (Quora, 2021).

• Individualism	• Collectivism
1. Fostering independence and individual achievement	1. Fostering interdependence and group success
2. Promoting self-expression, individual thinking, personal choice	2. Promoting adherence to norms, respect for authority/elders, group consensus
3. Associated with egalitarian relationships and flexibility in roles (e.g., upward mobility)	3. Associated with stable, hierarchical roles (dependent on gender, family background, age)
4. Associated with private property, individual ownership	4. Associated with shared property, group ownership

III. Solving Problems within China without the Issues Spreading Globally

During China's five thousand-plus years as a powerful nation, the country has met many challenges. One important piece of information the rest of the world may already know is that the PRC is a very private country. China prefers to handle its own problems without the assistance of other countries. The researcher supports this decision because, as the old and wise saying goes, "Never reveal your weakness to anyone!"

While attending a China-Dubai 2020 Expo in Guangzhou, Guangdong, the researcher read a powerful slogan that the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs had hanging, which read, "Maintain a Global Vision, Forge Ahead with Great Resolve and Write a New Chapter in Major-Country Diplomacy." The PRC works tirelessly to build its economy, protect its citizens, defend its country's borders, and build a better vision for the future. When China has an internal issue, the government works together without assistance from outsiders.

China's Globalized Trade Market:

The PRC enhanced its national income by globalizing the trade market (Ye, 2020). Other countries, of course, wanted to assist China, but the PRC kindly refused, and the results spoke for themselves. China's investments and promotions have developed a healthy economy. Furthermore, the PRC's domestic gap and intensified pressure on cross-border capital flows. When China took the necessary steps to improve its economy, the United Nations offered assistance, and naturally, China declined. The PRC pushed reforms to establish special economic zones, promote foreign investment, and set forth the liberalization of trade policies. These specific reforms opened up the Chinese economy globally, creating new opportunities for trade and investment (Ye, 2020). More importantly, the PRC solved its economic issues without the assistance of other nations.

China's Method for Resolving Issues:

Moreover, when China needs to solve issues, it tends to do so in a swift manner. For instance, China used to have a minor issue with crime in the early 2000s; however, by creating and pushing harsh penalties on those who break the laws put into place, as of the year 2023, China is one of the safest countries in the world (Feng et al., 2019). During the eight years the researcher has resided in China, they have never experienced a moment when they felt unsafe while walking down any street or ally in China. On the other hand, the researcher has experienced the sensation of not feeling safe while walking alone or even in a group in other countries such as the USA, the UK, Mexico, and Holland. Today, with the crime rate and especially gun-related crimes, the researcher would not want his wife or family walking alone inside large cities in the USA.

Forth Conducted Survey using a Qualitative Research Method:

A survey was conducted on 2 August 2023 on six Americans residing within Guangdong Province. Out of these six survey participants, one is self-employed and owns a Western style restaurant, another is also self-employed and sells musical instruments and accessories, the third participant owns an English training center with his wife and the remaining three participants are employed with high schools as English teachers.

Forth Survey Results:

All six participants reported that they have always felt safe while traveling anywhere within Mainland China and have no problem with their families traveling or walking alone without them during the day or night.

The same six Americans confessed that they have often felt unsafe walking down a public street in a large American city. Four out of the six Americans stated that they would prefer to carry some sort of weapon for protecting if they were walking at night in a large city in the USA.

China is One of the Safest Countries in the World:

By controlling crime with strict laws, China has become one of the safest countries in the world, creating a boost in Tourism for the PRC. Tourists from all over the world have stated that they felt safe while visiting China (Feng et al., 2019). It should go without saying that, once again, the PRC resolved an issue without the assistance of another nation.

How China Improved Their Education Standards:

Moving on, China improved its literacy rate and enhanced its education standards by investing heavily in education reform and redesigning academic policies. The PRC takes education seriously, and the Chinese Ministry of Education has programs to ensure teachers' professional development and teaching research groups (TRG) occur in all schools (Ding et al. 2019). By following action research (AR) and lesson design study (LDS), teachers can maintain curriculums that not only teach Chinese students but also challenge them, enhancing the pupil's cognitive abilities.

American teachers have been warmly welcomed in Mainland China for several decades. Although there are strict policies and passing a background investigation must be completed, the teacher applying to become a foreign educator must have their credentials approved by the China Ministry of Education (Ding et al., 2019). A foreign teacher must also prove that they have at least two years of education experience, they must have a teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) certification, a holder of at least a bachelor's degree that has been authenticated, and lastly, all textbooks and teaching materials must be approved by the Chinese Ministry of Education (Wang, 2019).

The teacher can educate the students as long as the American teacher follows the guidelines set forth by the Chinese Ministry of Education and the policies put in place by the institution they are employed. A popular course that university students are eager to learn is American culture. As mentioned earlier in this research paper, the young adults of China are interested in the diverse culture of America. The amount of materials available to educate students in American culture is almost unlimited. The teacher can bring American arts, music, geography, social science, history, politics, and folklore into their classroom to promote American culture to their students (Wang, 2019). Integrating attractive PowerPoint slides, video clips, and pictures accompanying the lesson plans for the students can enhance the educational experience for the pupils.

Figure 4

The Cultural Revolution. China Does Not Require Assistance from other Countries. (The Guardian, 2016).



IV. Spreading the Truth about the Chinese Government and its Citizens

Many Americans residing in the USA have a negative view of China; sadly, this is brought on by the American media and American-backed government reports. When an individual views, listens, or reads the news, they will likely believe it. A nationwide survey conducted in 2021 reported that 67% of Americans possess negative emotions towards the PRC, and on a 0 to 100 scale, the same poll rated China at 50 (Pew Research Center, 2021). Since July 2016, American news and government reports have consistently reported that China has harmed the American economy. From poisoned pet food made in China and shipped to the USA, to poor-quality of manufactured products, trade wars with the USA, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these news reports about China were not accurate or were reported without an honest source.

The Poisoned Pet Food Issue:

As per the poisoned pet food, when the story was originally reported to American citizens, it was a national headlined story on the front page of most newspapers and the top story on television news stations. The reports being issued to Americans stated that China was trying to poison the pets in America. Strangely, it was only the USA reporting this. No other country in the world had an issue with pet food made in China. When the truth was finally uncovered, mainstream media in the USA did not report the actual findings. A low-cost and generic dog food company wanted gluten-free wheat for their pet food formula. A Chinese broker from America ordered the wheat from China and did not clean the wheat chemical called melamine from the grain, and it was used in the dog food recipe, which caused some dogs to become sick (The New York Times, 2008). The broker was accused of knowing that the gluten-free wheat required cleaning to remove the melamine chemical protecting the grain during shipment. If the cleaning of the grain had been performed, the pet dogs would have never become ill.

The Manufacturing of American Products by China:

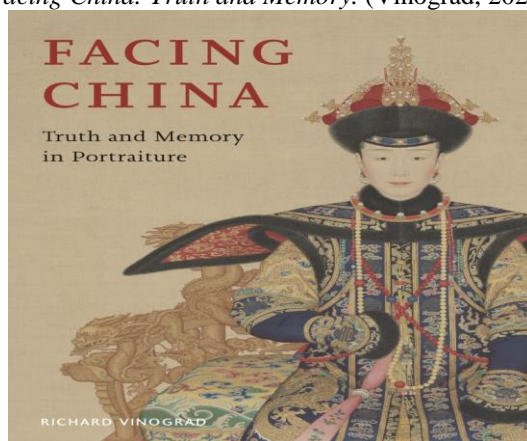
Regarding low-cost products made for cheap, regardless of where the items are made, most cheap commodities are meant to last only a short time. The PRC is the top-rated foreign manufacturer for the USA. Many imported products are made cheap; however, these items are shipped to the USA as requested by the buyer. Most Americans do not realize that nearly all goods shipped from the PRC to the USA are top-quality products, many of which are luxury items (Rapoza, 2008). Most American companies trust and will continue to order their products from China because the PRC is a trusted and highly skilled manufacturer of top-quality goods with a reputation towards product reliability, currency consistency, technical understanding, safety ratings, shipping costs, and domestic market growth (Rapoza, 2008). Sadly, most Americans are unaware that most of their high-end and top-quality products are made in China.

The China and American Trade War:

Several answers can be produced regarding why the trade war between China and the USA started in 2018. From protecting the American economy to creating American jobs to lower the balance of payment differences to unfavorable restrictions on exports and lastly, to diminish a trade deficit. When Donald Trump was still president of the USA in 2018, the Trump administration launched a trade war with the PRC by the means of imposed tariffs towards approximately USD \$350 billion worth of imports from China, and the PRC levied tariffs out of retaliation on an additional USD \$100 billion worth of imports, which was allowed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) trade and tariff rules (Meyer, 2018). Most news sources in the USA did not report the entire truth behind the trade wars, and they were simply informing Americans that China was trying to cheat and steal money from hard earned American citizens on products that the USA relies on, which was not the case.

Figure 5

Facing China: Truth and Memory. (Vinograd, 2022).



V. Results

How Chinese Citizens Honestly Feel about the United States of America

Believe it or not, many Chinese citizens have a huge respect towards almost anything that deals with or promotes the USA. American mode products, celebrities, all genres of music and movies and literature are admired by the people of China.

Fifth Conducted Survey using a Qualitative Research Method:

For instance, on 10 July 2023, the researcher conducted a survey while physically in the Center City district of the City of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, USA, which required forty-five minutes of looking for people displaying the American flag as a part of their attire or on an item they were carrying.

Fifth Survey Results:

The results produced a total count of twenty-three American flags. Individuals who did display the American flag were of mixed age groups. Majority were elders between the ages of fifty to eighty years old.

Sixth Conducted Survey using a Quantitative Research Method:

On 28 July 2023, the researcher conducted the same survey in the downtown area of Tianhe district of the City of Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China.

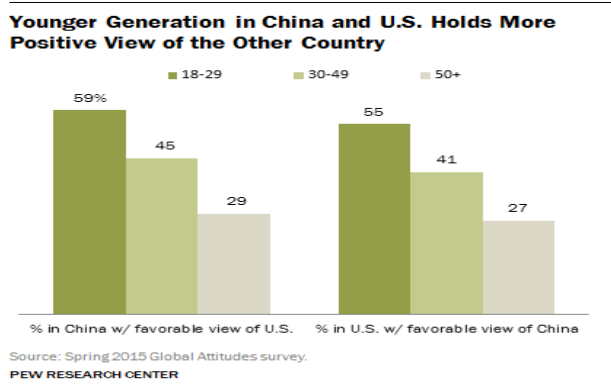
Sixth Survey Results:

The results were thirty-seven American flags. Most of the flags worn or displayed were young Chinese citizens, but the survey results showed that Chinese citizens admire or respect the American flag.

Furthermore, anyone who has spent time in China on a lengthy business trip or vacation or has lived in or is currently living in China can state that the majority of the people that live in China truly likes America. Many Chinese people will express that they like American actors, American clothing, American television shows and movies, music from the USA, American grammar from the English language, and the American English accent (Santamaria & Turrisi, 2021). Even after what has occurred with trade wars, COVID-19 blaming, and the harsh treatment that occurred towards Chinese people in the USA when the Corona Virus started in early 2019, many Chinese people still have an infatuation with the USA and hope to visit America one day.

Figure 6

How Americans and Chinese View Each Other: PEW Research Center Survey. (Wike, 2016).



VI. Conclusion

Despite the actions of false reports regarding China by the American government and the false or partially true stories announced by the news media in the USA, the people of China still have a fascination with America. Moreover, the Chinese government still welcomes American tourists and those seeking employment from America to travel to China. Why is this, you may ask? Simply put, many Chinese citizens are known to be forgiving and understand that most of what is being reported by the American government and media is not true about China. The Chinese government welcomes the promotion of American culture, and the Chinese Ministry of Education still wants secondary schools, high schools, and universities to learn about American culture to give Chinese students an educational understanding of the various cultures around the world. In addition, the people of China enjoy wearing fashionable American clothes, listening to popular music from the USA, and watching Hollywood-produced American movies, all of which promote American culture within Mainland China. Truth be told, the majority of Chinese citizens like America. If the people of America only knew how the people of the PRC truly felt about the United States of America, there would be a massive turn of events in a positive manner between the two countries.

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