

# **Cultural consensus modeling of Tibetan Buddhist concepts in cognitive science: Enhancing cross-cultural science education through mutual understanding**

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**Abstract:** The Emory-Tibet Science Initiative (ETSI), a two-way exchange between Western science and Tibetan Buddhism, is a partnership between Emory University, the Dalai Lama, and the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala, India. ETSI is a comprehensive 6-year science curriculum being implemented at Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in India, representing the most significant change in 600 years for the Tibetan Buddhist monastic curriculum. This two-way exchange between science and Buddhism offers potential for mutual enrichment leading to new discoveries. Yet a cross-cultural challenge exists between science faculty and monastic students in teaching and learning science, as both traditions can hold quite different understandings of fundamental concepts, including sentience, awareness, attention, and perception. Using cultural consensus modeling, we estimate Tibetan Buddhist concepts of core cognitive science constructs and compare them with Western scientific definitions. Results can enhance cross-cultural science education by supporting faculty in understanding students' cultural concepts, and vice versa.