

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SOFT POWER IN SOUTH ASIA: INDIA AND PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The concept of soft power is new to South Asia. Two major countries, India and Pakistan, are struggling to improve their image globally. Both countries have enough sources to manifest soft power, however, culture, political values, and foreign policies are the parameters this research uses to analyse the relevance of soft power in South Asia. It is argued that due to difficult post-independence internal security issues, political instability, socio-economic conditions, Afghan jihad and War on Terror, it is hard for Pakistan to pay attention to its soft image. Comparatively, India has had more success in improving its image globally. Though both India and Pakistan are trying to improve their image globally using soft power tools, both lack a well-defined policy on how it can best be utilised.

Key Words: *India, Pakistan, South Asia, Soft Power, Culture, Political Values, Foreign Policy*

Introduction

The concept of power is as old as human civilization. Power has always remained an important and central feature in traditional IR theories and literature. It is essentially the ability of an actor to achieve set goals and objectives. Traditionally, power was construed in terms of hard power, which amounts to military might. After the Cold War, a new concept of power emerged in international relations; a result of the processes of globalization, and the subsequent proliferation of information and communication technologies. This new concept of power has been named “soft power” by Joseph S. Nye and implies “the ability of a state to

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accomplish its goals through attraction rather than through punishment or the threat of punishment." Tools of attracting others as explained by Nye are all intangible such as culture, societal and political values, and internal and external policies.¹

The history of South Asia comprising of asymmetric power relations, territorial and political disputes and ideological differences has deterred or slackened the application of soft power strategies as an instrument of state policy in the region. That is why the region has remained engrossed in turmoil, wars and crises since the end of British colonization.² In South Asia today, India is utilizing its culture, economy, politics, media, diasporas and foreign policy in an effective manner to present its softer image.³ Currently, Indian policies are more acceptable internationally; it is seen as a tolerant, democratic, and peace-loving state worldwide and an important actor in world politics. Such image is an outcome of effective and intelligent utilization of the soft power potential at its disposal. On the other hand, Pakistan is facing many problems in this regard, most important being that it is viewed as an intolerant, extremist and terrorism-supporting state.

In the recent past, Pakistan has remained somewhat isolated in world politics and its global image is not very positive. This is due to the post-independence internal and external situation of Pakistan. Furthermore, Pakistan's policymakers have been unable to pay due attention to the softer aspects of Pakistan's power potential and have overly relied on hard power.⁴ Important post-1947 factors responsible for this are: Pakistan's security issues, its pro-American orientation in the cold war politics, its role in Afghan jihad and War on Terror, India's attempts at defaming Pakistan, the evolving US-India axis to counter China and to minimize Pakistan's role in Afghanistan, and the construction of Chabahar port as a potential counter to CPEC. These and many other factors did not leave enough space and time for any government in Islamabad to concentrate on image building strategies for Pakistan.

This article starts with the conceptualizing soft power. It then assesses soft power in South Asia, taking India and Pakistan as two states using soft power strategies. India and Pakistan's soft power strategies

1. Uma Purushothaman, "Shifting Perceptions of Power : Soft Power and Indian Foreign Policy," *Journal of Peace Studies* 17, no 2 &3 (2010).

2. Patryk Kugiel, "India's Soft Power in South Asia," *Journal of International Studies* 49, no. 3-4(2012).

3. Kulani Wijayabahu, "Strengths and Challenges for Utilizing Indian Soft Power: A Comparative Study with United States of America," *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publication* 4, no. 12 (2014).

4. Dr. Hassan Jalil Shah, Qaiser Ajmal Khattak & Dr. Saman Attiq, "Soft Power and its Efficiency: A Case Study of Pakistan," *IPRI Journal* XVI, no 2 (2016).

regarding culture, politics and foreign policies are explained in detail. Further, it is argued that India is successfully utilizing its soft power tools to improve its image globally, whereas Pakistan is unable to optimally utilize its soft power resources. However, both India and Pakistan are still unable to present any official policy related to their soft image.

Conceptualization of Power and Soft Power

Power is defined differently by different scholars. The Oxford dictionary defines power as the “ability to do or act”. Political scientist Robert Dahl defines power as “the ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do.”⁵ However, to make others do what someone wants them to do certainly requires some resources. These resources must be measurable and tangible. In the past, it was easier to evaluate and estimate power resources like population, territory, weapons etc. With the Industrial Revolution and advancement of science and technology, the concept of power has changed. At the international level, states having modern technology, developed economies and infrastructure, an educated and skilful population, an independent foreign policy etc. are more powerful. Thus, both tangible and intangible aspects of power turn out to be significant and essential.⁶ “The second face of power”⁷ bases itself on directive or command power manifested through inducement and threats. There is also indirect co-optive power where states agree to comply.⁸ Joseph S. Nye Jr explains cooperative power in the following words:

Co-optive power can rest on the attraction of one's ideas or on the ability to set the political agenda in a way that shapes the preferences that others express.... The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions. This dimension can be thought of as soft power, in contrast to the hard command power usually associated with tangible resources like military and economic strength.⁹

Thus, the old notion of power has changed. Rather than aspiring for hard power, states are now counting on the soft power paradigm. According to Joseph S Nye Jr.:

⁵. I. Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1961) cited in Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “The Changing Nature of World Power,” *Political Science Quarterly* 105, no. 2 (Summer, 1990): 177.

⁶. Ibid., 178-180.

⁷. Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, “Decisions and Non-decisions: An Analytical Framework,” *American Political Science Review* 57 (September 1963): 632-42.

⁸. Joseph S. Nye Jr., “The Changing Nature of World Power,” 181.

⁹. Ibid.

A country's soft power can come from 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).¹⁰

Joshua Kurlantzick, in his book *Charm Offensive*, (2007), explains that, "soft power has changed overtime." He defined soft power as "anything outside of the military and security realm, including not only popular culture and public diplomacy but also more coercive economic and diplomatic levers like aid and investment and participation in multilateral organizations."¹¹

The concept of soft power, introduced by Joseph S. Nye Jr. in the 1990s, has turned out to be a popular concept in international politics. Presently, at the global level, countries are trying to strengthen their soft power potential and project it well. This trend has emerged due to developed economies, modern technologies and well informed public. Countries like US, China, Russia, Brazil, Egypt, India, Bangladesh and many others have embraced soft power as a strategy to achieve their national interests. Soft power is about the future standing and perceived image of powers in international community. Monocle, an English Media Company, conducts a soft power survey every year:

... It ranks nations according to their 'soft power'; the amount of attractiveness and thus influence a country has within the world. Ranking nations according to their standard of government, diplomatic infrastructure, cultural output, capacity for education and appeal to business, the list is calculated using around 50 factors that indicate the use of 'soft power', including the number of cultural missions, Olympic medals, the quality of a country's architecture and business brands.¹²

The *Rapid-Growth Markets Soft Power Index* report (2012) has mentioned thirteen variables of soft power for emerging market

¹⁰. Joseph S. Nye. Jr., "Thinking Again: Soft Power," *Foreign Policy*, February 23, 2006,

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/02/22/think_again_soft_power

¹¹. Elmie Konwar Rengma, "Soft Power Game: A Study of China, India and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Tripartite," India China Institute ,<http://indiachinainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Elmie-Soft-Power-Game-A-Study-of-China-India-and-SAARC-Tripartite.pdf>

¹². "Who Rules The World?- Monocle's Top Twenty (Overview), *World Press*," November 20, 2012, <https://howtoattractpublicsandinfluencestates.wordpress.com/2012/11/20/who-rules-the-world-monocles-top-twenty-overview/>.

economies. These are divided into three categories: global image (a country's popularity globally), global integrity (country's respect for its own citizens and respect for others neighbours) and global integration (a country's interconnectivity with the rest of the world).¹³ The global image category includes media exports, language enrolments, Olympics, Time's 100 and most admired companies as its indicators. Indicators included in the global integrity category are rule of law, freedom index, voter turnout, and CO2 emissions; and the global integration comprises of immigration, tourism, university rankings and English fluency as its indicators.¹⁴

It is a narrow assumption that soft power is more related to foreign policy (political) objectives. However, it also has its economic dimensions too, which are hard to ignore. The emerging economies or emerging markets are an example to cite. The developing economies of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India and China), N-11 (Next 11 are Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Egypt, Turkey, Vietnam, South Korea, Nigeria, Mexico, Pakistan and Philippine) and CIVETS (Colombia, Indonesia, Egypt, Turkey, South Africa, and Vietnam) will play an important role in the world economy and politics. This belief is based on the following factors: financial stability, foreign direct investment, world-famous companies and brands, economic contribution in international organizations like UN, viable economic model etc. On the other hand, international domination is linked with the soft image of a country where countries have to compete in terms of soft power to obtain foreign direct investment, development aid, economic assistance and access to foreign businesses and global production networks. These are the indexes that link economy with soft power.

Soft Power in South Asia

Taking post World War II period as a starting point, South Asia was tangled in conflicts, rivalries and wars at that time. According to Kanti Bajpai the broader sources of conflict in South Asia included: power asymmetry between the countries of South Asia especially India and its neighbours, territorial disputes, involvement of other states in the internal affairs of South Asian states and identity clashes.¹⁵ South Asian states utilized hard power after their independence as an ultimate solution to

¹³. Ernst & Young, *Rapid-growth Markets Soft power Index* (Spring 2012), https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Rapid-growth_markets:_Soft_power_index/%24FILE/Rapid-growth_markets-Soft_Power_Index-Spring-2012.pdf.

¹⁴. Ibid., 7-9.

¹⁵. Kanti Bajpai, "Managing Conflict in South Asia," in Paul F. Diehl, and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 209-212.

conflicts. This hard power culture was rooted in security issues, political approaches, civilization diversity, cultural differences and economic dealings. However, in the 21st century, the changing concept of power is also making inroads in South Asia. The Indian government with its public diplomacy and 'incredible India' branding is making efforts to project India's soft image. India utilizes its democracy, diversified culture, cuisine, Information Technology, student exchange programs, movies, songs, resorts and diaspora towards this end. In Pakistan, there is currently a debate amongst academia and media about how to improve its image globally and how best to utilize its soft power potential; yet the Pakistani government does not have a well-defined soft power strategy and a broader policy to implement.

Soft Power and Pakistan

Any state confronted with a host of internal and external threats cannot ignore its military preparedness.¹⁶ The same is true for Pakistan. Since its inception, Pakistan has been facing security threats from India and Afghanistan. The focus of Pakistani policy makers since 1947 remained on hard power so to ensure its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Facing crises one after the other, it was difficult for Pakistan to balance out soft and hard aspects of its strategies. Thus, soft power has been missing in the strategic and political endeavours of Pakistan throughout history.¹⁷

With the processes of globalization and the proliferation of information and communication technologies internationally, the concept of power has greatly evolved. This change puts Pakistan in a challenging situation, as despite being a frontline state in the global war against terrorism and being a continuous victim of terrorism itself, the global community views it negatively. A host of factors like weak democratic structure, political instability, poor economy, illiteracy and support of the 1979 Afghan Jihad have contributed to this image problem.¹⁸ According to Ijaz Shafi Gilani, Chairperson Gallup Pakistan, a survey conducted by Gallup in 12 states showed that Pakistan is viewed negatively in all states.¹⁹

¹⁶ M. Ramzan, "Determinants of Defense Expenditures in Pakistan and India: An ARDL Bounds Testing Approach," *Journal of Social Sciences*, 33, no 1 (2013).

¹⁷ Ramzan, "Determinants of Defense Expenditures in Pakistan and India: An ARDL Bounds Testing Approach".

¹⁸ Shah, Khattak and Attiq, "Soft Power and its Efficacy."

¹⁹ *Pakistan's Soft Power* (Seminar Report, Islamabad: *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*. 2016), 9.

Thus, presenting itself as a moderate state, committed to international peace and security is a big challenge for Pakistan. The problem can be addressed through a *well-balanced* hard and soft power strategy.²⁰

Sources of Pakistan's Soft Power

Pakistan has potential to use its existing soft power resources to create its positive image regionally and internationally. These include rich cultural heritage, art, language, folk and *sufi* music, growing democratic values, women empowerment, proactive role in countering terrorism, huge economic potential and human resources that can be leveraged to change negative perception about the country.

Culture

Pakistan has a rich culture and is the custodian of thousands of years old civilizations; it is home to Indus valley and Ghandhara civilizations - regarded as the most ancient in the world.²¹ Apart from this, diverse groups like Persians, Greeks, Aryans, Arabs and Mughals invaded and resided in the sub-continent, leaving behind a rich and diverse cultural heritage.²² Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, Taxila, Badshahi Mosque, Noor Mehal, Gulzar Mehal etc., are a few examples of the tangible aspects of Pakistani cultural and historical heritage.²³ Six historical sites of Pakistan are on UNESCO's world heritage list. These sites include Buddhist ruins at Takht-e-babri, the Mohenjo-Dero ruins, archaeological ruins, Shalimar garden, forts, Taxila, and monuments of Makli and Rohtas. Further, Pakistan is home to almost 601 languages.²⁴ Nature has also endowed Pakistan with beautiful landscapes including the beautiful northern areas, mountain ranges, deserts etc.²⁵ Despite this assortment, Pakistan has remained unsuccessful in using this heritage as soft power. Through effective use of tourism and media, Pakistan can use its cultural

²⁰. Shah, Khattak and Attiq, "*Soft Power and its Efficacy.*"

²¹. "Buddhism and the Gandhara Civilization," *Story of Pakistan*, updated June 1, 2003, <https://storyofpakistan.com/buddhism-and-the-gandhara-civilization>; Stanley Moran (ed.), *Pakistan: Society and Culture* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1957).

²². I. H. Malik, *Culture and Customs of Pakistan* (London, Greenwood publishing Group, 2006).

²³. Mairajul Hamid, Saqib Mehmood, "Soft Power and Pak-India Relations," *Advanced Humanities and Social Sciences* (2016). <http://www.consortiumpublisher.ca/ft?d=1039&jnb=Advanced%20Humanities%20and%20Social%20Sciences&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

²⁴. I. H. Malik, *Culture and Customs of Pakistan*.

²⁵. Mairajul Hamid, Saqib Mehmood, "Soft power and Pak-India Relations."

diversity for building its soft image among the community of nations. However, a number of problems like terrorism, militancy, corruption and lack of funds are major hurdles in the flourishing of tourism industry.²⁶

Changes in the international system have compelled Pakistan to pay some attention to this aspect of soft power and consequently, a separate Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism has been established. The main task of this ministry is the promotion of all types of cultural heritage and values, including architecture, dance, folk-tales, cinema, music, theatre, literature, etc.²⁷ In addition to this, Pakistan has also developed a number of cultural and friendship centres for the said purpose. In December 2016, Pakistan successfully launched its first film festival at the UN headquarters, New York. Moreover, *Sufi night* and one exhibition of the contemporary art from Pakistan were arranged too.²⁸ The Foreign Office has successfully organized 'Agha Shahi Lecture series'. The major aim of these lectures was sharing of viewpoints between Pakistani and foreign intellectuals. A calligraphy exhibition was launched in a single volume named *Al-lama Bil Qalam*. Pakistan's diplomatic missions abroad celebrate national days with a cultural touch and strive to improve the image of Pakistan. Such activities are a ray of hope. However, attention should also be given to the fashion and music industries, which are relatively strong and vibrant in Pakistan.

According to Nelson Mandela, "sport has the power of changing the world,"²⁹ Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon once stated, "Sport has become world language—that breaks down all the barriers—a powerful tool of progression and development."³⁰ Pakistan has realized this potential and timely paid attention to sports also. Pakistan's first international Super Kabbadi League will begin in Pakistan in May 2018. In this league, players from seven countries will participate. Moreover, Pakistan Super League 'PSL' is successfully reviving the game of cricket and improving the soft image of the country. Also, Pakistani players are participating in all international events related to different sports like boxing, hockey, cycling, squash, football etc. Many young Pakistanis are

²⁶. A. M. Khan, *Foreign Tourism in Pakistan*. Economics, Research and Statistics Section, Ministry of Culture, Archaeology, Sports and Tourism, Division Review: part II., 1976.

²⁷. M.Y. Abbasi, *Pakistani Culture: A Profile* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1992)

²⁸. "First Ever Pakistani Film Festival Opens at UN," *The Nation*, December 4, 2016.

²⁹. Gulrukh Tausif, "Decline of Sports in Pakistan Badly Effecting our Youth," *Samaa TV*, August 5, 2017, <https://www.samaa.tv/sports/2017/08/decline-of-sports-in-pakistan-badly-affects-our-youth/>.

³⁰. Ibid.

making world records and have their names placed in Guinness World Records.

The power of the film industry can be understood in the words of Robert Frost, who said that, "Film is art, film is commerce—film is protest,-documentation, stimulus,-conversation, amusement."³¹ However, after a bad phase in 80s and 90s, Lollywood is reviving in Pakistan and producing new films. Films which did considerable business include; *Actor In Law*, *Lahore Se Agay*, *Mir Taqi Mir*, *Mah e Mir*, *Dobara Phir Se* and *Ho Mann Jahaan*.³² This huge business has encouraged producers to invest in the industry; further, new state of the art cinemas have been established all over Pakistan. The first indication of the revival of Lollywood and Pakistan's will to use it as a soft power tool was the organization of a film festival at the Asian Society in New York in 2016.³³ Fawad Khan, Saba Qamar and Mahira Khan are the Pakistani stars who are working successfully in Bollywood. Nusrat Fateh Ali, Rahat Fateh Ali, Atif Aslam etc., are among famous Pakistani singers in India. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, with two Oscar Awards, is also a soft projection of Pakistan's strength. Pakistan's drama and fashion industry are also very much vibrant and popular world over. Nobel Prize winner Malala Yousufzai is also a figure who reflects the soft side of Pakistan.

For attracting international tourists, media can play an important role by introducing tourist spots. It requires coordinated efforts by the government, Ministry of Culture, local tourism industry and media. The government of Pakistan should allocate money plus effective developmental, maintenance and advertisement policies, so that the world would come to explore the cultural diversity as well as social and cultural values of hospitality, friendliness and religious tolerance displayed by the citizens of Pakistan.³⁴

Political Values

By political values, one means governmental and organizational norms and the interaction of different units of society with each other. Generally, political values include democracy, freedom of speech, economic development, interaction among different classes, social

³¹. Ibid.

³². Suljuk Mustansar Tarar, "Reviving the Film Industry," *The News (Islamabad)*, January 4, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/176560-Reviving-the-film-industry>.

³³. Suljuk Mustansar Tarar, "Reviving the Film Industry."

³⁴. Samina Khalil, M.K. Kakar, and Waliullah, *Role of Tourism in Economic Growth: Evidence from Pakistan Economy*, (proceedings, parts I and II, 23rd Annual General Meeting and Conference of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists, Islamabad, 2008), 985-995.

coercion, equality etc.³⁵ If these values are considered positive internationally, they can help states in gaining their desired outcomes, but if the mentioned political values of a state are viewed negatively, it diminishes a state's soft power potential.³⁶ A fragile democratic system, repeated military intervention, feeble political values, poor literacy rate, and high rate of corruption and extremism have added to the already appalling image of Pakistan internationally.

Pakistan is a democratic country with parliamentary system of government, as envisioned by the Quaid-i-Azam, its founding father. Unfortunately, Pakistan's democratic journey has not been smooth. There were military takeovers, which derailed the democratic process from 1950 to 2000. According to Hasan Askari Rizvi:

This does not mean that the people have given up on the primacy of the popular will, participatory governance, accountability of the rulers and governance for serving the people. The ideological commitment to these principles persists which will continue to question the legitimacy of non-participatory and authoritarian governance and political management.³⁷

Since 2008, Pakistan has witnessed a successful democratic transition process. Two successive governments completed their 5-year tenure. What is important is to inculcate pure democratic values by encouraging democracy within parties, ensuring proliferation of political parties, giving importance to political institutions and instilling a culture of interdepartmental cooperation.³⁸

Additionally, Pakistan can portray its soft image by highlighting women empowerment and poverty mitigation efforts. There is a 21 percent representation of women in the National Assembly of Pakistan.³⁹ For protection of women against domestic violence and harassment at work place, the central and Punjab legislative assemblies passed two bills - The Protection against Harassment of Women at Work Place 2010,⁴⁰ and

³⁵. Nicolae Kallos, Ovidiu Trasnea, "Political Values: Their Status and Social Function, *International Political Science Review* 3, no. 2 (April 1, 1982): 182-189, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/019251218200300204>.

³⁶. M. Li (ed.), *Soft Power Chinese Emerging Strategy in International Politics* (Lanham: Lexington books, 2009)

³⁷. Hasan Askari Rizvi, "Democracy in Pakistan," in *Panorama: Insights into Asian and European Affairs: A Future for Democracy*, Dr. Wilhelm Hofmeiste (ed.) (Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011), 117-136.

³⁸. Ishrat Hussain, "Economy of Pakistan: An Overview," (Keynote Address, Expo Conference, Karachi, 2005).

³⁹. Ibid.

⁴⁰. The Gazette of Pakistan, "The Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010," March 11, 2010, <https://qau.edu.pk/pdfs/ha.pdf>.

Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Bill 2015. Furthermore, the vibrant media in Pakistan is playing its role in keeping check on corruption, political parties' performance, conduct of the leaders, working and performance of state institutions etc. In Pakistan, an independent judiciary is also contributing to the political stability of the country. The dismissal of serving Prime Ministers, Yousaf Raza Gillani and Nawaz Sharif, are the examples of an independent and strong judiciary in Pakistan.

Foreign Policy

Quaid-i-Azam clearly defined the principles of Pakistan's foreign policy, basing it on good relations with all countries, peace and prosperity, and adherence to the principles of the UN charter. However, due to security issues (wars with India and hostile and aggressive behaviour of Afghanistan) and Cold War politics, Pakistan was unable to follow an independent foreign policy. Under US pressure, Pakistan had to fight a proxy war in Afghanistan. After 9/11, Pakistan provided all types of support for the US invasion of Afghanistan. Yet, despite all its efforts for curbing terrorism, Pakistan has always been condemned as indulging in a 'double game' and always demanded to do more.

This is one side of the story. The other side of the narrative is that Pakistan is successfully playing its role in the war against terrorism. It also played the role of a mediator between the Taliban and the US administration. It has also provided NATO a route to Afghanistan, and has been involved in bilateral and multilateral diplomatic activities. It has improved its relations with Russia, Central Asian States, various Muslim, European and African countries etc. The Pakistani diaspora, more than 7 million in number, are effectively enhancing the soft power of Pakistan. Wherever they live in a community, it's named as Little Pakistan. These people celebrate important national days, festivals and are known for their festivities.

Pakistan has a huge potential to sustain its economy; it is the 9th largest country in terms of human capital with about 57.2 million workers, huge amounts of untapped natural and mineral resources, along with an important strategic location.⁴¹ Further, the economic condition of Pakistan has started to stabilize with the signing of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, and foreign direct investment has increased.⁴² In addition, its IT industry is the fastest growing in the world. There are almost 1,500 registered IT companies. Currently, the IT sector holds 2.8 billion US dollar shares in the world market and its freelance programmers are one of the

⁴¹. Areeba Arif, "Enhancing Pakistan's Global Profile and Influence: Priorities and Policy Options," *ISSI Issue Brief*, 2016.

⁴². Ibid.

most hired after Australian, British, and American free-lancers. In terms of human resource, about 60 percent of its population comprises of youth.⁴³ This huge proportion of young people can boost Pakistan's economy and its image worldwide.⁴⁴

For presenting its softer image internationally, Pakistan can also highlight its efforts for upholding international peace and stability through peacekeeping operations.⁴⁵ Pakistan is one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions. Since 1960, it has contributed more than 160,000 troops for about 42 UN such missions. Presently, it is contributing almost 7500 troops in about six UN mandated missions.⁴⁶ These missions provide a platform for the development of friendly ties with different countries. For example, by the end of Iran's UN peacekeeping mission, the Indonesian president said: "Pakistani troops in this peace keeping mission—were Pakistan's best ambassador."⁴⁷ Pakistani women's contribution to these missions helped mitigate the image of Pakistan as a state where women are suppressed.⁴⁸

In contemporary societies, electronic and print media are considered important tools of foreign policy. Undoubtedly, it is media which presents a positive or negative image of a state to the international community. The government of Pakistan should take strict measures to ban all types of content highlighting violence, terrorism and other types of negativity regarding Pakistan.⁴⁹ In this regard, the content of state-run PTV world should be improved for attracting international audience. There is also a need to produce documentaries for international viewers and ensure their paid broadcast/ telecast for projecting positive aspects of the country.⁵⁰ The media should highlight the work of Abdul Sattar Edhi, Chippa and other great Pakistanis.⁵¹ Thus, in addition to electronic media, academia,

43. Kukreja, V. & Singh, M. P. *Democracy, Development and Discontent in South Asia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., 2008).

44. Ibid.

45. Ume-Farwa, "UN Peacekeeping Missions: Pakistan's Soft Power," *ISSI Issue Brief*, June 3, 2016.

46. Areeba Arif, "Enhancing Pakistan's Global Profile and Influence."

47. Lt Col Kabir Ahmed et al. "The Peace Force: An Overview of Pakistan Army Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Mission," *Hilal*, 2015. <http://hilal.gov.pk/index.php/layouts/item/1666-the-peace-force-an-overview-of-pakistan-army-contributions-to-un-peacekeeping-missions>

48. "Pakistan Proud of Women Serving in Peacekeeping Missions: Lodhi," *Dawn* (Islamabad), October 14, 2015.

49. Y. A. Ali. *A Comparative Analysis of Media and Media Law in Pakistan* (Sang-e-meel Publications, 2012).

50. Ibid.

51. *Pakistan's Soft Power* (Seminar Report).

scholars, think tanks, students and researchers should contribute through written material to present the true face of Pakistan, its viewpoints and constraints to the international audience.⁵²

Presently, there is a growing realization among academics, journalists, policy makers, and intellectuals in Pakistan that efforts are underway to project Pakistan's soft image and replace its negative image in the comity of nations. However, there are certain impediments such as, growing extremism, poverty, illiteracy, corruption, terrorism, sectarianism, and absence of a well-formulated policy for lobbying and positively projecting Pakistan's image.

Soft Power and India

Since its independence, India has followed the path of non-alignment and apparently distanced itself from the Cold War politics. This facilitated India in gaining likeness among the developing and developed world simultaneously. Additionally, because of its democracy, economic growth, rich culture, pluralistic society, politics, movies, music, pop culture, art and foreign policy, New Delhi has successfully promoted its soft image among the community of nations. India's former External Affairs minister Shashi Tharoor said:

India is fast becoming a superpower, not just through trade and politics, but through "soft" power, its ability to share its culture with the world through food, music, technology, and Bollywood. In the long run it is not the size of the army that matters as much as a country's ability to influence the world's hearts and minds.⁵³

According to Kadria Pethiyagoda, "Much of the globe sees India as a relatively non-violent, tolerant and pluralistic democracy with a benign international influence. Its values are seen as largely positive."⁵⁴ India employs its soft power tools progressively.

Culture

The Indian culture is one of the oldest cultures of the world. It has been a part of the Indus Valley civilization, that developed back in 3000 BC. It is considered the birthplace of Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and

⁵². Ibid.

⁵³. "Why Nations should Pursue Soft Power", *Ted Talks*, March 22, 2014, http://www.ted.com/talks/shashi_tharoor?language=en.

⁵⁴. Kadria Pethiyagoda, "India's Soft Power Advantage: Deeply Entrenched Factors Make India a Uniquely Attractive Great-power Partner," *The Diplomat*, September 12, 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/indias-soft-power-advantage/>.

Jainism. Later religions like Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam arrived in India, which gave a cultural diversity to the region. Also, the area remained part of rising empires, economic activities and cultural pluralism. Thus, with the passage of time, India became the center of learning, art, literature, architecture, knowledge, medicine, philosophy, commerce, trade, tourism, spirituality and much more.

Since 1950, Indian Council for Cultural Relations has been successfully utilizing the cultural potential of India to build cooperation between India and other countries, thus projecting India's soft power. Presently, the Indian government is using culture as a tool to build its relations with the world. By means of religion, it is developing relations with South East Asia, (Buddhism/Hinduism), Middle East (Islam), Europe (Christianity) etc. India rebuilt Nalanda University in 2014. This university has historical significant as it was built in the 5th century CE and became a center of learning and has been invigorated with contributions from China, South Korea, Japan and Singapore.

Indian diaspora exists throughout the world as "some 22 million ethnic Indians are scattered across every continent."⁵⁵ These people are very important for not only preserving their cultural identity but also projecting soft image of their country. Further, Indian diaspora stick to their norms, values and culture and try to pass these to the next generations. They speak their native languages, prefer their own cuisine, observe national festivals and watch Bollywood movies. They hold important political posts thus forming very strong pro-Indian lobbies. Indian food, music, dress, language, culture etc. are popular in western countries as well. Uma Purushothaman mentioned India's soft power in these words:

When Indian writers win international awards like the Man-Booker prize, when India becomes the guest of honor at international book fairs like the Frankfurt Book Fair, when Indian movies are screened at International Film Festivals like Cannes and when Indians win awards like the Nobel and Magsasay awards, India's soft power is built.⁵⁶

June 21 has been declared by the UN as the annual International Day of Yoga. This shows India's growing soft power stature. The present government of Prime Minister Modi has stressed on yoga as a soft power

⁵⁵. "Diasporas: Mapping Migration," *The Economist*, November 17, 2011, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/11/diasporas>.

⁵⁶. Uma Purushothaman, "Shifting Perceptions of Power and India's Foreign Policy," *Journal of Peace Studies* 17, no 2&3 (April-September, 2010).

tool and decided to establish the Ministry for Yoga in order to teach and practice yoga in foreign universities.⁵⁷

India, by dint of its culture, monuments, mosques, temples, Gurdwaras and wildlife attracts tourists from around the world. It has twenty-eight UNESCO world heritage sites. In 1997, 2.37 million foreign tourists arrived in India and this number rose to 6.97 million in 2013 with an annual growth rate of 5.9 percent.⁵⁸ The main reason behind this tourist boom is the fact that India wisely makes use of its historical and cultural links with South East Asia, Middle East, Central Asia and Europe. As mentioned by Daya Kishan Thussu:

...combination of civilization which has strong Hindu-Buddhist foundations, centuries of Islamic influence, and integration with European institutions and ideas, gives India unparalleled cultural resources to deal with diverse, globalised, and complex realities of the twenty first century.⁵⁹

Presently Indian government has adroitly blended public diplomacy with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the Ministry of Tourism's 'Incredible India' campaign, and the work of the Ministry for Overseas Indians.⁶⁰

Political Values

India is known as the largest democracy, a secular republic and a liberal country in the world with a constitution providing protection, equality, fundamental rights, right to religion, education and cultural rights to its citizens. India, since its independence, has believed in democratic principles and has cherished the smooth transfer of political power since 1947. It is a federation comprising of twenty-nine states and seven union territories. India has Hindus in majority, with Muslims, Sikhs and Christians as minorities. For minorities' developmental programs, the Indian government established Ministry of Minority Affairs. The Ministry for Minority Affairs, the National Commission for Minorities and the National Human Rights Commission take care of any kind of

⁵⁷ Sonali Singh, "Yoga as Indian Soft Power," *USC Public Diplomacy*, December 19, 2014. <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/yoga-indian-soft-power>

⁵⁸ "India Tourism Statistics at a Glance," 2013, <http://tourism.gov.in/writereaddata/CMSPagePicture/file/marketresearch/Incredible%20India%20final%2021-7-2014%20english.pdf>

⁵⁹ Daya Kishan Thussu, *Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood* (New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, 2013), 11.

⁶⁰ "Rise of India as a Soft Power," *Chanakya IAS Academy*, <https://www.chanakyaiasacademy.com/images/Article-IV-Nov.pdf>.

discrimination against minorities in India.⁶¹ To create communal harmony, the Indian government celebrates minorities' festivals.⁶² India has elected President, prime ministers, and famous bollywood stars, sports stars, scientists, writers and singers from different minorities. All these people have improved the soft image of India. According to Nicolas Blarel:

India's democratic record, unprecedented for most decolonized countries could be regarded as a strong soft power resource. The new international consensus following the Cold War around democracy, human rights and market-oriented economic reforms has reinforced the appeal of India's political achievements. The stability of India's democracy over more than 60 years, especially in a neighbourhood rife with ethnic conflicts, has demonstrated that unity in diversity was possible in a democratic format and there could be an institutional alternative to Western political systems. India's democratic, federal and secular political model (although not always perfect) could be considered as an institutional model of reasonable accommodation of minority rights, and of flexible adjustment to different ethnic and linguistic claims.⁶³

Foreign Policy

India has two main objectives in being a part of soft power countries club - regional and international. At the regional level, India has ambitions to be the dominant actor of the region. This is associated with India's size, population and growing economy. Further, it is related to the decreasing role of US in the region along with growing role of China in South Asia. Currently, South Asia is seen as a China dominated region,⁶⁴ as "South Asia is steadily emerging as a strategic priority for China."⁶⁵ China's soft power tools for South Asia include Confucius Institutes, educational scholarships, cultural diplomacy initiatives and development assistance.⁶⁶

President Manmohan Singh once said, "If we as South Asians work together, there is nothing that we will not be able to achieve. India will play its part in the resurgence of South Asia." He further said,

⁶¹ India, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/171754.pdf>.

⁶² Ibid., 22.

⁶³ Nicolas Blarel, "India: the Next Superpower? India's Soft Power: From Potential to Reality?" *LSE Research Online*, (May 2012): 30, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/43445/1/India_India%27s%20soft%20power%28lsero%29.pdf.

⁶⁴ Parama Sinha Palit and Amitendu Palit, "Strategic Influence of Soft Power: Inferences for India from Chinese Engagement of South and Southeast Asia," *ICRIER Policy Series*, no. 3 (August 2011), 1-20, http://www.icrier.org/pdf/Policy_Series_No_3.pdf

⁶⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 15-20.

“South Asia cannot be immune to the trend of greater integration, both at the regional and global levels.”⁶⁷

The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s foreign policy priorities focus on SAARC, China, Russia, US and Japan. The five priorities, include:

1. Economic and technological development.
2. The orientation of domestic and foreign policies toward this objective.
3. The emphasis on national power including military power.
4. Stress on soft power.
5. Reduction in self-imposed constraints on actions that other countries may construe as inimical to their interests.⁶⁸

Since 1947, India has realized importance of cultural diplomacy and in pursuit of this, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was established in 1950; for using Indian cultural diversity in its strategic and foreign policy objectives to constitute closer relations with different states. Further, being the largest democracy, a liberal and secular state and a growing economy having liberal film, sports, music and fashion sectors, India has gained a prestigious position in the global arena.

India’s soft power is not altogether a smooth sail. Uma Purushothaman mentions challenges to soft image of India, which include: the use of hard power (arms and police) against different regions of India like (Occupied) Kashmir, Chhattisgarh and wherever people protest against government, human rights violations, poverty, corruption, illiteracy, child labor, interference in internal affairs of neighbouring countries, desire for nuclear weapons, lack of sports culture, and growing ties of India with US and Israel.”⁶⁹

According to a 2017 Human Rights Watch Report:

Limits on free speech and attacks on religious minorities, often led by vigilante groups that claim to be supporters of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), are an increasing concern in India. In 2016, students were accused of sedition for expressing their views; people who raised concerns over challenges to civil liberties were deemed anti-Indian; Dalits

⁶⁷. “India will Contribute to South Asia’s Resurgence: Manmohan,” *The Gaea Times*, April 27, 2010, <http://politics.gaeatimes.com/2010/04/27/india-will-contribute-to-south-asias-resurgence-manmohan-31393/>.

⁶⁸. Arvind Virmani, “Recalibrating India’s Foreign Policy,” *The Hindu*, November 1, 2014. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/comment-recalibrating-indias-foreign-policy/article6553306.ece>.

⁶⁹. Uma Purushothaman, “Shifting Perceptions of Power: Soft Power and India’s Foreign Policy.”

and Muslims were attacked on suspicion they had killed, stolen, or sold cows for beef; and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) came under pressure due to India's restrictive foreign funding regulations.⁷⁰

Further, since 1989 the ruling party BJP has adopted *Hindutva* as an ideology to establish Hindu hegemony.⁷¹ Encyclopedia Britannica calls it "... an ideology that sought to define Indian culture in terms of Hindu values."⁷² The caste system of India, which can be described as its "hidden apartheid,"⁷³ based on the religious ideology of Hinduism, is being actively practiced in India. Apart from cast system, minorities, especially Muslims, are subject to extreme violence. A number of restrictions are imposed on them; for instance, Muslims are not allowed to sacrifice cows on *Eid-ul-Azha* and Muslims are even murdered by Hindu extremists for eating beef.⁷⁴ Rampant poverty⁷⁵ and low literacy rate have also given rise to a number of separatist movements in India. Further, the rise of Hindu fanatic BJP and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in India are indicators of Hindu extremists taking control of India, which can endanger India's soft image.

Women are subjected to extreme violence and suppression in India. Reports confirm almost 26 offenses against women per hour; these calculations only cover reported crimes as most of the misdemeanours remain unreported due to social taboos.⁷⁶ According to Thomson Reuters Foundation expert poll, India is ranked as the "fourth most dangerous country for women."⁷⁷ Crimes against women cover a large spectrum of offences like kidnapping, dowry deaths, forced suicide, sexual harassment,

⁷⁰. Human Rights Watch: World Report 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/india#8deaa8>.

⁷¹. English Oxford living Dictionaries, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/hindutva>.

⁷². "Bharatiya Janata Party: A Political Party in India," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bharatiya-Janata-Party#ref789897>.

⁷³. Sanjiv Pandita, "Caste Based Discrimination in India - Hidden Apartheid for Dalits," *Asia Monitor Resource Centre*, January 1, 2005, <https://amrc.org.hk/content/caste-based-discrimination-india-hidden-apartheid-dalits>.

⁷⁴. Human Right Watch World Report 2017: India, "India Events of 2016", <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/india>.

⁷⁵. "The Hunger Project," <http://www.thp.org/our-work/where-we-work/india/>.

⁷⁶. Chaitanya Mallapur, "Crimes against Women Reported Every two Minutes," *India Spend*, September 4, 2015. <http://www.indiaspend.com/cover-story/crimes-against-women-reported-every-two-minutes-84240?>

⁷⁷ Sumnima Udas, "Challenges of being a Women in India," *CNN*, Jan 12th, 2013. <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/01/12/world/asia/india-women-challenge/index.html>.

abortion of female fetus, child marriages, rapes and gang rapes etc.⁷⁸ Even the foreign female tourists are not safe in India. After reporting of rape cases of female tourists in India and the consequent decline in the rate of foreign female tourists, the Indian Tourism Ministry issued a code of conduct that advises foreigners not to wear skirts and travel alone at night.⁷⁹ Such decisions are strongly condemned and criticized.⁸⁰

Conclusion

The focus of Indian and Pakistani foreign policy even today rests upon security concerns, terrorism, mistrust of neighbours and economic development.⁸¹ Due to internal and external security issues, both countries are modernizing their defense forces and system. For India, security issues branch out from separatist movements, terrorism, human rights violations, and extremism in the shape of growing ideology of *Hindutva* etc. For Pakistan, security threats are not only external i.e., India and Afghanistan centric, but also from terrorist organizations and fundamentalist groups that are banned in Pakistan, yet are sprouting illegally. The main problem is international mistrust of Pakistan and non-recognition of its sincere efforts against terrorism.

Presently, both in India and Pakistan, there is a realization about presenting a positive image abroad, to be influential part of the international community. Therefore, both countries are deliberating on building their soft power paraphernalia. This understanding is more at an academic level among scholars and researchers. Both countries still do not have an official doctrine and well-defined soft power policy and strategy. For both the countries, it is important to first formulate an elaborate soft power policy; second, keep in mind the impediments in building a soft image of the country; third, build infrastructure to attract tourists; fourth, put their own houses in order and stop the blame game; fifth, fully support and utilize the diaspora as the ambassadors of their respective countries and, finally make use of public diplomacy, as in the present globalized world only those win who tell their stories effectively and convincingly.

⁷⁸. Ibid.

⁷⁹ "Female Tourists should not Wear Skirts in India, says Tourism Minister," *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/29/india-female-tourists-skirts-safety-advice>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹. Patryk Kugiel, "India's Soft Power in South Asia," *International Studies* 49 no. 3&4(2012):351-376, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0020881714534033>.

