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Review Article

SOFT POWER AND PAK-INDIA RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This research paper focuses on the importance and relevancy of soft power for Pakistan. In this age of globalization and interdependence the use of hard power can be tricky and unproductive to bring the desired results; the importance of soft power has increased notably. Pakistan as a developing nation needs it more than ever to improve her tarnished image and achieve a better social position. Her neighbor India, on the other hand, has been working on her soft power potential for quite sometimes. Her entertainment and IT industry not only contributes to her economic success but to her image-building as well. All around the world, India is globally present and admired for. It is high time for Pakistan to start building her image by applying principles of soft power through the use of cultural expressions, active diplomacy, politics, media and human capital etc.

Key Words: Soft Power, Diplomacy, culture, ICCR, GDP

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INTRODUCTION

Significance of power in international relations can be understood from the fact that the two major schools of thought, essentially contrasting in nature, have incorporated it in one form or another. Whether it's the key to survival in an anarchical society (Realist Thought) or it is vested in a hegemon or institution regulating rules and norms for the good of all (Liberal Thought) the concept of power is there because of its immense value. All actions of a state eventually boil down to the gain of some kind of power.

Typically, nations use power in three forms, i.e. Threats, Coercion and Attraction.

The above two forms are associated with 'hard power' which influences other's actions by the direct use of power but it is the third form with which we are concerned here in this research the power of 'attracting other's thoughts and actions'. This power is termed as soft power .

What is Soft Power?

According to Joseph Nye, Jr., soft power is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion." For Professor Gallarotti, "soft power represents a form of meta-power. Meta-power describes situations in which power relations themselves are embedded within some greater constellation of social relations that influence those relations and thereby influence final outcomes that derive from the interactions among actors. The structures of the bargaining boundaries are determined by the processes going on in the greater social relations within which they are embedded (i.e., endogenous rather than exogenous)". Another proponent of soft power, General Wesley Clark believes that "it (soft power) gave us an influence far beyond the hard edge of traditional balance-of-power politics."

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Elements & Components of Soft Power:

According to Joseph Nye, soft power “could be cultivated through relations with allies, economic assistance, and cultural exchanges.” In this quote three distinguishing components of soft power are highlighted which are: Politics, Diplomacy, Economics, and Culture.

Importance of Soft Power in Foreign Policy:

The importance of ‘softness’ in a country’s foreign policy can be determined by the advantages it brings :

- Firstly, globalization and interdependence has constructed a world where coercive methods against one state are equal to self-punishment.
- The democratization of states has made hard power options almost impossible to use; a country deciding to do otherwise is subjected to the reproaches of others.
- Invention of nuclear weapons has also restricted the use of military means as the ease by which a war can now escalate may prove hazardous for the world at large.
- Overall worldview has altered about the use of hard means as “the utility of respect, admiration and cooperation (i.e., soft power) has increased relative to the utility of coercion with respect to the usefulness of the instruments of statecraft.”
- The changes in the social and political perception have made state more conscious about their economy rather than their war-fighting abilities.
- Lastly, the creation of transnational institutions embedded in the form of a global network has highlighted the gains made out of cooperation and collaboration.
- Indicators of Soft Power

Indicators or components of soft power indicate the soft potential of a country by providing a list of some factors which help nations in determining those fields or aspects of their policies which they have to work on, in order to exercise soft power. They are same as the components of soft power and can be called as such. As discussed in the previous section, many scholars have defined these indicators under different names but all of them essentially point out to the same aspects of a country’s policy. This research will analyze the six indicators which are, Political, economic, diplomatic, human capital, foreign presence, and cultural aspects.

India & Pakistan

The main focus of this research revolves around the relations between the two neighboring rivals: India and Pakistan, and the element of soft power in their policies essentially towards each other. First we will analyze their soft power separately and after that vice-versa effect of their soft power will be examined.

INDIAN INDICATORS OF SOFT POWER

“When a bhangra beat is infused into a Western pop record or an Indian choreographer invents a fusion of kathak and ballet; when Indian women sweep the Miss World and Miss Universe contests, or when Monsoon Wedding wows the critics and Lagaan claims an Oscar nomination; when Indian writers win the Booker or Pulitzer Prizes, India’s soft power is enhanced”

Shashi Tharoor, Pax Indica, 2009

In order to measure the true soft power potential of India, this research will look at the six indicators of soft power in Indian context.

1. Political indicators

Indian political achievements such as stability of democracy for more than 60 years, solidarity and social cohesion in a neighborhood rife with ethnic conflicts and social harmony in extreme diverse

population has increased its appeal in developed and developing nations alike. The market-oriented reforms have also opened vast avenues for Western countries to pool their investments in India. Furthermore, India has recently started to promote democracy in countries rampant with domestic conflicts. For this purpose, India has contributed aids and development funds to provide a stimulus for application of rule of law. Case of Afghanistan is notable in this context. India has emerged a kind of institutional alternative to Western system of states with flexible adjustments to overcome ethnic and ideological dilemma .

2. Economic Indicators

According to the Author, "While economic power is usually considered a hard and material asset, a country's economic development model could also be interpreted as a soft power resource to the extent that its accomplishments prove attractive to others." Following the 1990s Indian image of an underdeveloped, overpopulated, unpremeditated country has replaced with a country having vibrant culture, modernization, flexible reforms, extremely developed IT industry with a lot of potential for foreign investments.

Foreign investments and work force from all corners of the world has made Indian economy so strong that its GDP has increased with the average of 9% annually since 1990. This economic success is an asset of India for the construction of its soft power .

3. Cultural Indicators

Popular Indian entertainment industry, dubbed as 'Bollywood', has contributed a lot in exporting Indian culture abroad. Shashi Tharoor, an Indian diplomat, has explicitly elaborated the effect of Bollywood in making India as super-soft-power by sharing 'its culture with the world through food, music, technology and Bollywood' . Blarel has quoted that 'Tharoor's contention is that today it is not the size of the army or of the economy that matters (two dimensions where India has failed to compete with other great powers like China or the US) but instead it was the country that told the 'better story' which would qualify as a global player."

The global popularity of yoga, Indian cuisines, Sarees, Indian dramas and films, and Ayurveda is a proof of popularity of Indian culture in other parts of the world. To explore the cultural diplomacy option further, Indian government has now set up 'The Indian Council for Cultural Relations' (ICCR) which has 22 branches in 19 countries. The basic function of these centers in to organize book fairs comprising of budding Indian writers or books discussing the positive aspects of India, film festivals, art exhibitions primarily promoting the plural multi-cultural society and rich heritage of India. Tourism industry has also a lot to gain from these activities by promoting the prime tourist spots of India such as Taj Mahal, Goa, Red fort and various Buddhist monuments.

4. Global Presence indicator

Global presence factor is linked with cultural indicator but it doesn't include culture only. It encompasses all the dimensions' exportable elements which are contributing to Indian soft power in foreign countries. Two important mediums of global presence indicator include: Mass Media and Disaster Relief Funds.

According to a report: "variables that reflect a country's global image include its export of media goods, the popularity of its language, the number of Olympic medals it has earned, the number of its citizens who are global icons and the number of its companies that are globally admired." All these factors range into the mass media category of India. Indian businessmen has been included in TIME and Forbes, Indian Premier League has global viewership, Indian Bollywood stars have been invitees of Oscars, The Globe etc., Indian beauties have won global pageants, and Indian companies have global spread and reach. All this add to the global presence factor of India.

Secondly, Indian active participation in disaster relief funds and developmental aids has further supplemented her global reach. The country prides itself on its speed in disaster response: it was one of the first donors to release aid after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and 2010 Haiti earthquake.

5. Diplomatic Indicators

Indian diplomacy has an active policy and its function is to protect Indian image worldwide. Indian diplomats have always engaged in active transportation of positive aspects of their country to the rest of the world. Indian consulates and embassies have arranged book fairs, film festivals, cultural expos and socio-cultural events to raise awareness about India and produce a better image of India other than already present. India has recently explored the potential of public diplomacy by creating Public Diplomacy Division in India's Ministry of External Affairs in 2006. This division has to work for the contribution of diplomatic factor to its soft power by convening 'dialogue on foreign policy issues with all segments of the society at home and abroad.'

6. Human Capital

Indian diaspora accounting for 2nd largest population of world has a prospective input in the human capital resource of India. Its population amounts to around three quarters of the total population of South Asia having the biggest middle class in the world equaling to 100 to 300 million people. According to a report 'the Indian diaspora in the United States have a higher per capita income than any other ethnic grouping; more than one-quarter of start-ups in California's Silicon Valley have been founded by Indians;85 and the second largest source of skilled migrants to Australia is from India'

PAKISTANI SOFT POWER INDICATORS

"Sadly, today Pakistan is being drowned not by its enemies but by its own leaders. Corruption, nepotism and radicalization due to lack of education, plus poverty lay at the heart of Pakistan's ills. From being the country that other Muslim nations looked up to, Pakistan has become a country that other Muslim nations look down upon"

The first thoughts that come to mind after hearing the word 'Pakistan' are of a region fraught with terrorism, extremism, domestic problems, and balance of payments crisis. But that was not the case in the past. Pakistan has seen glory days in the 1960s and 1970s where economy of Pakistan was a model to follow for other developing nations such as South Korea who copied the 5-year plan suggested by Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq; the World Financial Center in Seoul is designed and modeled after Karachi. The topics below search the prospective of Pakistani soft power potential in the six indicators necessary for creation of soft power.

1. Political Soft Power Indicators

Joseph Nye, dubbed as soft power guru, believes that world image of a country is enhanced when it adopts policies prevalent and popular in the world. Today's world has established that principles of democracy, personal freedom, liberalist views, observation of law and, respect for human rights are the relatively correct rules by which a country should erect its political infrastructure. Since the inception of Pakistan in 1947, it has experimented with all kinds of system of governments whether it is local self-government, presidential form of government, and democratic government. But the effect of these diverse experiments and especially the factor of military coups has diminished its political image in the rest of the world. What needs to be done is the erection of firm foundation of democracy in all levels of Pakistani politics be it local level or domestic or international. The trend of 'red-tapism' has to be completely eradicated for the prosperity of democracy. Also drone fiasco is constantly building a negative connotation of Pakistan as quoted in a newspaper:

"How can anyone respect a country, the only Muslim nuclear power at that, which gets bombed by a

foreign country every few weeks and does nothing about it?"

2. **Economic Soft Power Indicators**

In contrast with the political scenario, Pakistan's economy has been in better conditions than its political institutions. The current crisis has been preceded with some remarkable achievements such as:

- One of the largest labor and manpower resources in the world with 57.2 million workers, making it the 9th largest country in terms of available human workforce.
- GDP growth rate of 8.4 % in 1992 – the best for any civilian govt. since independence.

In addition to that, the decade of 1960s has been considered as 'Golden Era' and Pakistan during those days was known as 'Asian Tiger'. In recent times, Pakistan has been subjected to worse financial crises due to corruption, absence of visionary leadership, lost opportunities, bureaucratic objectives and policy blunders etc. To construct a softer and positive image of Pakistan, it has to adopt dynamic economic reforms like our neighbor India to upgrade not only our international standing but also to elevate the internal domestic conditions.

Need of the hour is to achieve the same economic success which Pakistan experienced in the past, as World Bank remarked in 2005:

"Pakistan was the top reformer in the region and the number 10 reformer globally – making it easier to start a business, reducing the cost to register property, increasing penalties for violating corporate governance rules, and replacing a requirement to license every shipment with two-year duration licenses for traders"

3. **Cultural Soft Power Indicators**

The major potential of Pakistan's soft power is in its cultural aspect as Pakistan is blessed with scenic landscape and rich cultural heritage. The tourism industry has a lot of opportunities to exploit and bring a very positive and beautiful (literally) picture of Pakistan in the eyes of the world. There are three types of tourist spots of Pakistan that can really work towards the construction of softer image of Pakistan. They are:

- Natural Landscapes: these landscapes include northern areas of Pakistan such as Murree, Jheel Saif-ul-Malouk, Hunza Valley, Skardu, Shakarparian etc, southern dessert such as Cholistan and Thar and Salt Mines of Khewra.
- Architecture: Pakistan in terms of architecture has much to boast about. It has some of the world's finest palaces and buildings including Badshahi Mosque, Bibi Jewandi Shrine, Noor Mahal, Gulzar Mahal, Faisal Mosque etc.
- Cultural Heritage: Pakistan is the place of the birth of Indus Valley civilization. It has some of the oldest heritage sites such as: Mohenjo Daro, Taxila, Harrapa etc.

The film industry has to work to achieve its previous glory and produce stars similar to the likes of Waheed Murad and Zeba etc. Pakistani Music Industry has been active for quite sometimes and Rahet Fateh Ali Khan, Atif Aslam, Strings etc. have toured and concerting around the world. Every time they collaborate with any foreign artist or perform there, Pakistani soft power is enhanced.

4. **Global Presence Indicators**

As previously mentioned, the global presence factor is contributed by two institutions, i.e. Media, communication and aid.

Pakistani media has contributed some good aspects to Pakistani image but it has been unable to keep an optimistic mind-set about the current demolished situation of Pakistan. Reality based shows highlighting only the negative aspects and social grievances of Pakistani nation, has adopted a so-

called self-titled voice of repressed masses. All these negative showcasing has projected an image of Pakistan even worse than it really is! The rest of the world believes that Pakistan is a good-for-nothing country. If Pakistani media collectively agrees to promote the positive aspects of Pakistan, it will really help in building an edifice of soft power resource which Pakistan can access and rely on any time.

Another thing which really adds to one's global image is its response to any disaster world-wide. The quicker a country responds to disasters around the world, the better image it will have. The problem with Pakistan is that its economy has been so much fractured that it is not a donor in development projects and humanitarian assistance funded by UN or its own. Contrarily, Pakistan is the major receiver of aid from US, UK, UNHCR etc. This further construes the global standing of Pakistan as a country which is unable to feed its own population and have a weak economic system. Another problem of being an aid receiver is the conditions attached with this aid which prove a tool of foreign interventionist ambitions subjugating Pakistan's sovereignty and in turn, undermining its opportunities for a better image of a country which is strong and resilient.

5. **Diplomatic Indicators**

In contrast to India, Pakistani diplomacy has suffered from passivity. Pakistani diplomats, instead of working towards erection of a better environment of Pakistan, usually are the reason of its disastrous situation in the first place. The Memo gate scandal not only undermined the political trends of Pakistan but diplomatic imaging as well. Pakistan needs to establish serious institutions to carry out its diplomatic activities. The option of public diplomacy is unexplored in Pakistan. Role of foreign office is subjected to the background. All decisions are taken by the political and military elites of Pakistan. There are two phases in Pakistani diplomacy when it showed some promise:

- Era of Bhutto in Foreign Office: when Bhutto worked as Foreign minister he balanced the ties between Washington and Moscow through his policy of bilateralism. He also worked to smooth relations between US and China
- Maliha Lodhi as Pakistani Ambassador to US: her role as ambassador has been praised by the US experts as well. Sen. Hank Brown, Colorado Republican, said, "She's an absolute dynamo. They [Pakistan] couldn't have picked anyone with more energy and brighter mind. I am convinced much of the improvements between the two countries-the United States and Pakistan-is because of her and her incredible energy levels." Her work in the betterment of Pak-US relations is commendable.

Pakistan has to rediscover its diplomatic potential in order to climb up in its global standing.

6. **Human Capital Indicators**

Pakistan accounting for the sixth largest population of the world has enormous resource of human capital. It can benefit from it by using its population and ninth largest labor force in positive construction of the nation. Pakistani individuals have been contributing to the positive addition of it but the population as whole has rarely been instrumented in a way as to depict it in a progressive light. They have been portrayed as radical Islamist fanatics ready to open up someone's throat who dares to defy the efforts to build global Islamic Hegemony. But the real representation of the Pakistani masses can be measured in the words of an Indian columnist, N. Jayaram, who comments:

"(And) warm-hearted the people of Pakistan most reputedly are. Countless have been the accounts I've read over the past many decades, by Indian journalists, academics, civil society activists, film-makers as well as people in the official establishment, of immense generosity that was showered upon them in the Pakistani street as well as in air-conditioned altars of the genteel bourgeoisie. Almost all have spoken of being treated courteously, restaurateurs refusing payment for tea, snacks or meals upon learning (that) the diner was from the other side of the border, and countless similar

gracious gestures.”

COMPARISON OF INDIAN & PAKISTANI SOFT POWER

Pakistan and India has been forceful rivals ever since the separation of the former from the latter. Various theories have been propagated in order to cultivate hatred between the two. At the time of partition, various incidents regarding transfer of assets, migrants and demarcation of boundaries resulted in hostilities between the two newly independent nations both of which were trying to find their footing after the departure of the British. Their 65 year-ed relationship is no different. It has been marked with four wars, various ethnic conflicts, water issues leading to a major trust deficit between the two.

The penetration of Indian culture into Pakistani society, economic superiority, active diplomacy, politically sound infrastructure and positive branding of Indian image has caused enormous pressure on Pakistan as there is imbalance-of –power between the two. India has been tagged as a legitimate party and a progressive country which believes in the good of the whole region. Pakistan on the other hand is unstable and explosive society posing a danger not only to its existence but to the stability of the region as a whole.

This research is an attempt to build awareness among the Pakistanis itself, about the importance of soft power. Previous topics has explored the soft power potential of the two countries in detail, following topics will discuss the use of soft power between the two.

Indian Soft Power in Pakistani Context

Here individual cases have been analyzed where India has asserted soft power in terms of influencing Pakistan:

□ The Kashmir Issue

The unresolved conflict of Kashmir has been the cause of mutual problems between the two countries. It has been created with the creation of both of these states and remains a problem of major importance till now. Like Palestine, world community primarily UN has attempted to resolve it but no appropriate solution has been suggested till now. Since 1948 UN has passed five resolutions and 11 demilitarization plans for the withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani troops from the region. India has reportedly rejected all of them while Pakistan accepted these. India also refrains from the holding of a plebiscite to evaluate the will of Kashmiris. But UN and USA has adopted pleasing India policy and considerable soft power of India has made other countries to refrain from reproaching India in this matter. Therefore, world has chosen to side with India as Pakistan has already so much negative aura around it that nobody really cares who's on the right side.

□ Bollywood

The impact of Bollywood in Pakistani society has been prevalent and prominent. Pakistani ritual like Basant, Holi, Wedding functions all have roots in the Indian culture showcased in Bollywood movies. The Khan family of India, due to its religious linkage, is popular in Pakistan even more than fellow Pakistani stars. Indian movies have been reportedly pirated across the border even when they were banned officially. Today, an average Pakistani kid knows all the major actors of Bollywood and average Pakistani house-wife knows all the Indian soap operas of India. The popularity of these dramas has been so much that Pakistani is now replaced with soap operas very similar to Indian ones. This is the Indian soft power which brings a lot of revenue and influence for India. Furthermore, in contemporary era Pakistani artists have made their ways to Bollywood and they are quite successful and very much liked in Indian society. So, soft power from both the sides are quite efficient and influential in public opinion making.

▣ **Trade**

The trade and IT industry of India has been growing since 1990s. It is in Indian interest to start bilateral trade relations between India and Pakistan to take advantage of the huge markets of Pakistan and to extract capital from there. Therefore, India has now resumed Pak-India peace process in order to access the market of India. It is Indian soft power at display which is dictating the terms and direction of peace process to Pakistan.

▣ **Relations with US**

India due to its soft power has been smoothing its relationship with US. US have now formed nuclear deals with India due to the image of India as 'peace-loving' country. While Pakistan's 65-year policy of 'pleasing US' has not brought such fruitful results. Despite being a major non-NATO ally of US, Pakistan is still a suspect in the eyes of the whole world including its own friend, US! The problem here is the absence of application of soft power by Pakistan to upgrade its image in the world or in at least US.

PAKISTANI SOFT POWER IN INDIAN CONTEXT

Although soft power is a relatively new concept in Pakistan but there has been small episode of Pakistani soft power displays, which are discussed below:

▣ **Pakistani Artists**

Many Pakistani artists have traveled across the border to showcase their talent in an industry much developed than their own. But whatever the reason, the fact remains that they are Pakistani and their demand in an industry much developed from Pakistan shows that Pakistan has soft power in terms of those individuals. Their participation in Indian movies has generated mixed responses from both sides. There are those Indian who believe that employment of Pakistani artists is undermining the local talent and there are those Pakistanis, especially mullahs, who say that working for their biggest enemy is comparable to sin.

But there are optimists too, who believe that it would generate the positive reputation of Pakistan. The artists who have contributed in highlighting the positive side of Pakistan are: Atif Aslam, Rahet Fateh Ali Khan, Meera, Veena Malik etc. the case of Veena Malik is of special importance that includes both soft power of Pakistan and Indian fixation towards Pakistan. The naked pictures of Veena Malik in FMH, an Indian Magazine depicts that Pakistan is not that Radical Islamist country as everyone thought it to be but the tattoo of ISI and her military apparel shows how fixated India is on Pakistani Intelligence Agency. Case of Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy is also relevant as the first Pakistani to be awarded an Oscar which is a huge achievement of Pakistan.

▣ **Army**

Pakistani army has always been a source of pride for Pakistanis. Although it ranks quite lower in India nowadays but after analyzing the limited resources and downward economy Pakistan has managed to bag Gold Medals in 2010 and 2012 Ex Cambrian Patrol Test, dubbed as toughest test by NATO, beating the likes of Indian and British armies explains the military might of Pakistan and generate a soft power for Pakistani military.

CONCLUSION

This research has been an attempt to bring the attention of Pakistani decision-makers to the unrealized potential of soft power options for Pakistan. No one has done any serious research to focus on the soft power potential of Pakistan. One mention here should be given to a recent research conducted by Muhammad Nawaz Khan and Beenish Altaf funded by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) which has come up with soft power policy plan in the name of De-radicalization,

Disengagement, and Rehabilitation (DDR) strategy which attempts to provide steps for the construction of a basis for soft power planning of Pakistan. It is a good effort and more research needs to be done in this field.

This research has concluded in pointing out some issues which may prove to be quite beneficial for a softer strategy for Pakistan these steps include:

- Coming up with a plan of liberal reforms for Pakistani economy to shoot up and become immune to external shocks
- Recovering economy and proper extraction of taxes in order to reduce debt
- Focusing on media to provide a positive picture of Pakistan by global presence factors
- Pakistani community abroad has to take some responsibility as well along with Pakistani diplomats and consulates to increase awareness about Pakistani culture by arranging cultural expos and by increasing support for Pakistani artists there
- Lollywood has to be re-structured or to disappear completely so path is clear for another industry comprising of producers like Shuaib Mansour and Osman Khalid Butt
- Pakistani nation itself has to start respecting its heroes if they want the world to respect them (the case of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan is relevant here)
- Trade relations with India should be encouraged in order to curb anti-Pakistani elements in India.
- Pakistani cricketers, being the best in the world, should be used further as a tool for cricket diplomacy to extract leverage from Indian government.

All in all, there are various options which have to be explored to generate positive feeling towards Pakistan. Pakistan just needs to be more innovative, creative, active and stable like its neighboring country India which is now more popular in Afghanistan where 92% Afghanis favor India, while 74% disapprove, Pakistan. All this is because of India's soft power. It is high time that Pakistan should start working towards its better image.

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