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India's Soft Power as a Pillar of Foreign Policy

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Abstract: ***The power dynamics of nation-states around the world have undergone a significant change in the twenty-first century with regard to how governments define and demonstrate their authority. Since today's political world is becoming increasingly interconnected, governments have no choice but to spend heavily in both their soft and hard power matrices. Because of the current state of world politics, India has a better chance than ever before of becoming a major player in international affairs. In India and around the world, the election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has caused a sea change in public opinion about the dangers of religious militarism. These rights have become increasingly popular due to the increase of Hindutva rights. "Soft power" refers to the ability of a nation to achieve its foreign policy goals and objectives without resorting to coercion. With or without the use of "hard power," which can refer to methods such as theuse of force or other very effective diplomatic initiatives, it is still a critical tenet of foreign policy. Hard power can be utilized in international and bilateral diplomacy to create a more expansive narrative. Economic, sociocultural, and even civilizational aspects all play a significant part in this wide-ranging topic. It all starts with messaging, which can be done through official channels like speeches and press conferences, or through the wide variety of media outlets available in today's hyper-connected world. Using India's "soft power" in international politics is the primary subject of this article.***

Keywords: Soft Power, Globalization, Foreign Policy Etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Governments are expected to display their soft power through the use of commercial innovation, culture and diplomacy, education, and governance. For the nation's diplomacy to have diplomatic weight, this all-encompassing "branding" is filled up in a number of ways. Public and private resources must be creatively merged to make this packaging a success. Effective diplomatic soft power measures are still essential, notwithstanding the current state of geopolitical turmoil. Given the prevalence of criminals and gangs' use of social media, this is no

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small task. People in the Indian Diaspora see the rise of India's influence in the international community as a positive development that helps us all deal with the issues weall face. People in India, the world's most populous democracy, are driven by a desire to rise up the ranks. There are no worries about it becoming an aggressive, revisionist state as its military strength increases in most countries nearby and abroad. This nation's millennia of civilisation and growth continue to be a source of inspiration for many other countries as they debate the appropriate political instruments for their own progress.

India's civilisation is so diverse that practically any country can identify with and feel at home in it. As a result of the growing distrust between nations, our ability to pursue our national strategic objectives is critical. According to Prime Minister Modi, the Indian foreign policy for "unsettled times" consists of engaging with immediate and extended geographies, building relationships networks on the basis of economic interests and connecting human resources with global prospects. An international order in which the country's strategic goals may be achieved in a volatile geopolitical environment requires a multi-alignment strategy that includes the deployment of soft power, as depicted in this comprehensive vision of an international order that is both stable and just. All of these programmes are coordinated by the Ministry of External Affairs and other government agencies, which are responsible for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fields of economic cooperation and development projects. As a means of cross-cultural dialogue, these programmes include academic exchanges, archaeology, study chairs, and performing and visual arts. As a result of this, the Indian brand and media relations will both benefit. These departments and organisations collaborate on a wide range of projects in their respective fields such as science, information and broadcasting; tourism; sports & health; meteorology; shipping; financial and banking; as well as many other areas of expertise. International Solar Alliance and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure are its two most significant multilateral Endeavour's. "Hard core" organisations like the military participate in disaster relief efforts to assist foreign nationals stranded in disaster zones far from India's beaches. Besides the prime minister's list of priorities, these projects cover a wide range of themes. Using soft power to communicate India's uniqueness to the rest of the world is essential. India was a poor, socially uneven society when it earned independence in 1947. It only became one of the world's mostimportant geopolitical and economic powers after establishing itself as a constitutional democracy. Demographic members who are confident enough in their cultural background to avoid "foreign" notions are the ideal target audience for this campaign. India's image can be leveraged through a holistic narrative to meet the Prime Minister's foreign policy objectives

Objectives

- To investigate India's "soft power" in relation to its overall foreign strategy.

2. METHODOLOGY

This article uses both descriptive and analytical elements to back up its assertions. This is accomplished by the wide use of secondary sources, which also include, but are not limited to, newspaper articles, magazine articles, and investigative reports.

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3. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

A lot of attention has been paid to Joseph Nye's concept of "soft power," yet the processes by which soft power affects the actors in other countries still remain poorly defined. Discussions of foreign policy's "soft power" are almost exclusively confined to historical, religious, cultural, and personal connections. Some foreign policy experts believe that if the other country understands that you got your religion, culture, and/or language from India, it will make India happy and proud. This is a terrible strategy, and it hasn't worked out as well as first thought. Nearby and distant, the neighbourhood serves as an excellent illustration of this phenomenon. In the same country and group, those who are perceived to be of Indian heritage in terms of their religious and cultural ties are both loved and reviled. In other words, social and political differences have caused this to be the case. People and social groups who make up a country's population provide the basis for this theory.

Despite its proximity to neighbouring countries like Pakistan and China, India's population is not only split by the country itself. There is no limit to the number of countries and cultural identities that can be cited. Whatever the country's proximity, the people's love and aversion to remembrance of their shared history have a significant impact on their views of India. It's true that governments these days make decisions and that soft power connections focused on individuals have minimal impact even when the concept exists. There are times when governments must make difficult decisions. True, they are out there. There is no place like a coffee shop when it comes to soft power cultural contacts. Power and the external support it provides are of paramount importance to the ruling class. In today's world, a country's moral stance, if it is maintained over time, is what gives soft power its staying force. After independence, India gained a moral fibre that had never before been witnessed in the rest of the world thanks to the liberation movement. We're not saying other countries don't care about soft power; on the contrary, they do. Undoubtedly, "soft power" cannot be achieved by simply flexing your muscles. Soft power is more effective than strong power, but it isn't a substitute for it. To this day, whether or not soft power is still effective is determined by the country's moral position and the resolve with which it is upheld. There is nothing further to say. When India gained independence, our moral superiority over the United States and China was more important to our foreign policy than our military and financial strength. However, India's modern- day contributions to the Global South were felt beyond the country's borders. Narendra Modi strongly promotes India's soft power, which includes Bollywood, Sufi and yoga as well as a common legacy in the arts, architecture, food and democratic values. Although it is too early to tell whether or not India's foreign policy objectives are being achieved by these initiatives, the fact that a coordinated effort is beginning to improve India's international brand value is encouraging. As a result, Indian diplomacy and its place in the global political system are likely to undergo considerable changes in the coming years.

3.1 Why soft power matters in India's foreign policy

To the outside world, India is seen as a benevolent country, committed to advancing democracy, international cooperation, and peace through multilateralism as an effective means of addressing the world's common problems. Aspirational, extroverted citizens are a large part

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of the population in India, a culturally diverse, democratic country. Most nations, both at home and abroad, do not see its growing military capability as a threat since it is not aggressive or revisionist. Its narrative of millennium civilisation and growth within a democratic framework has attracted huge attention in practically all corners of the world as various nations engage in raucous internal discussions about the best policy tools for their own cohesive, inclusive advancement. Because of the depth and breadth of Indian civilization, nearly every country can identify with anything India has to offer and may relax as a result. In the current climate of growing strategic distrust among states, this condition greatly helps the successful pursuit of our national strategic goals.

In a country like India, which has a long history of being a modern democratic republic since its independence, soft power is considered as a beneficial foreign policy tool. When it comes to using soft power to achieve foreign policy objectives, however, it only works if it is doneso in a systematic and methodical manner. The concept of soft power resources, how to use them effectively, and why they are so important in international relations are all widely misunderstood. It was long before the present discussions on what constitutes "soft power" began that kingdoms, both vast and little, as well as contemporary nation states, had used culture, political institutions and foreign relations to affect favorable outcomes. Since its independence from the British Empire, India has proven to be an inventor of global peace and stability concepts, despite its economic incompetence and dependency on outside assistance. It was during the Cold War that India attempted to build an alternative path of non-alignment and serve as a guide for newly independent nations and developing nations that had been decolonized. Recent political and economic success in India has given soft power assets and their application to preserve and advance India's interests new significance in the international community.. Indian soft power was never exhausted because of its cultural richness and civilizational appeal. It would be an understatement to discuss any facet of India's soft power. Cultural expressions in India range from dances to theatre to epic locationsto Indian films to the wide variety of Indian cuisine. It is important to note that India's rising economic profile has given it new soft power resources, such as aid to other developing countries, participation in humanitarian and disaster relief efforts, and the ability to serve as a centre for higher education for developing countries in Asia and Africa.

Independently or in collaboration with other nations who share its viewpoints, India has taken the lead in providing technical and professional training to developing nations. India's essential contribution to Afghanistan's civilian reconstruction since 2001 has been welcomed by the international world, the Afghan government, and the Afghan people alike without intruding in its internal affairs. Additional scholarships have been given by India in conjunction with the countries that received them, and it is accepted that India has grown in its ability to aid in humanitarian efforts in the wake of natural disasters, as shown in 2004 with the Indian Ocean tsunami. For example, India's medical supply diplomacy reached outto all countries, not just its close neighbours, during the coronavirus pandemic crisis.

India was a little behind the curve when it came to using its diplomatic corps and missions to achieve more major strategic aims. Nevertheless, India's foreign policy machinery has

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successfully adapted to modern information and communication technology to tell the world about India. Effective and frequent communication on India's progress and beneficial impact on global governance was critical. As an Indian-born lifestyle practice with a global following, yoga needed an overhaul to reflect its global stature while also honoring its cultural ties to the subcontinent. As part of the Indian government's economic diplomacy, the Indian Diaspora around the world was reconnected and helped to find their ancestor's homelands as part of the country's soft power projection. With the "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan," the "Make in India," and the "Incredible India" campaigns, the nation of India has been give a boost in its international image and brand recognition. Internationally, India's reputation has been enhanced due to the accomplishments of Indian organisations such as the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in space exploration and satellite launches for other countries. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) should focus more on readjusting its presence in targeted countries, with clear objectives and outcomes evaluations, in the near future. There should be increased cooperation between public and private institutions in India and their counterparts in Asia and Africa in order to provide affordable yet high-quality education. According to many criteria, the effectiveness of a nation's soft power and its public diplomacy efforts can be measured by. A statistical and quantitative examination using only a few selected qualities and indicators does not do justice to the concept of India or the appealit holds for those living outside its borders.

3.2 Civilizational legacies

In an address to the public in January 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi articulated the goals of Indian foreign policy for "uncertain times." All these objectives were ranked in order of importance, starting with the extension of connectivity to nearby and distant geographies, followed by the development of relationships based on economic priorities, the liberation of human resource potentials, the establishment of international cooperation and the restructuring of global institutions in line with Indian civilizational legacy. An important role for soft power in supporting this benevolent global image, as represented in this expansive vision of a stable and equitable global order, lies in pursuing multi-alignment to advance the strategic goals of the country. When working with other government agencies on projects such as economic cooperation, development, upgrading of skills, student exchanges and scholarships, interpersonal relations, training programmes, think tanks, and cultural exchanges such as the performing and visual arts, archaeology, study chairs, academic conclaves, and so on, bilateral and multilateral exchange is required. As part of this effort, it also aims to improve media relations and enhance India's global image.

The other departments and agencies have collaborative initiatives in their respective domains of specialisation, such as science, information and broadcasting, tourism, sports, health, meteorology, shipping and transportation, finance and banking, and various connective infrastructure projects, etc. Two of India's most important foreign projects are the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

3.3 Realizing foreign policy objectives

The Indian military forces participate in humanitarian efforts and disaster relief, as well as the evacuation of foreign nationals stuck in disaster areas, and are included in this. All of the topics

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raised by the prime minister in his speech will be addressed by these initiatives.
India needs to tell the rest of the world what it is that makes it tick. One of the world's most important geopolitical and economic powers has emerged from the ashes of an impoverished and socially unequal nation. In this case, it's about a society that's confident enough in its own values to stop worrying about excluding "foreign" influences. The prime minister's foreign policy aims can be achieved if he uses a comprehensive narrative that enhances India's reputation.

4. CONCLUSION

In an effort to understand India's rise to prominence in the international arena, a number of academics and professionals have examined the country's economic growth, military expansion, and demographic shift, among other factors. As a result, New Delhi's growing emphasis on enhancing its "soft power" credentials through the attractiveness of Indian culture, values, and policies has gone largely unnoticed in this evaluation. The ability of India to share its culture with the rest of the world, rather than only trade and politics, is said to be the cause for its current status as a powerhouse by diplomats like Sashi Tharoor. It can be difficult to determine India's true soft power assets, or which of these assets have genuinely boosted India's worldwide status. It's been difficult to track India's rise over the last decade since soft power is so difficult to define and measure. The most crucial question is whether China, another Asian powerhouse, can be compared to India's. A larger emphasis on outcomes and institutionalization is needed rather than solely relying on the organic expansion of Indian culture in other countries. Achieve the correct balance between India's goals and the realities of today's global stage, rather than going beyond. By focusing on results and aligning objectives and capabilities, India's public diplomacy programmes may take full advantage of the country's enormous soft power resources. Soft power, public diplomacy, and country branding projects are the key to India's strongest and most robust economic growth. In light of India's history of democracy and the non-intrusive character of its use of soft power, this advantage must not be squandered.

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