

Understanding Indian soft power

فهم القوة الناعمة الهندية

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Abstract:

Soft power constitutes one of the most important modern terms in the field of foreign policy of countries in terms of its employment according to various political, cultural and social perspectives, as there are many angles and visions towards analysing and designing the employment of soft power in the foreign policy of countries, in this context, India stands out under the rule of its Prime Minister Narendra Modi as one of the global models in the field of employing soft power where the article aims to read and analyse the various Indian tools in employing its soft power in its foreign policy field from cultural to political to social and economic

Keywords : soft power, India, Foreign Policy.

الملخص:

تشكل القوة الناعمة أحد أهم المصطلحات الحديثة في ميدان السياسة الخارجية للدول من ناحية توظيفها وفق مختلف منطلقات السياسة، الثقافية والاجتماعية حيث تعددت زوايا والرؤى صوب تحليل وتصميم توظيف القوة الناعمة في السياسة الخارجية للدول، في هذا السياق تبرز الهند تحت حكم رئيس وزرائها نارندرا مودي كأحد النماذج العالمية في ميدان توظيف القوة الناعمة حي يهدف المقال الى قراءة وتحليل مختلف الادوات الهندية في توظيف قوتها الناعمة في مجال سياستها الخارجية من الثقافية، مروراً بالسياسية وصولاً للاجتماعية والاقتصادية الكلمات المفتاحية: القوة الناعمة، الهند، السياسة الخارجية.

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Introduction:

The concept of power constitutes a major debate subject among various thinkers and scholars of international relations, as the intellectual dispute over the definition of power reflects the interests and values of those who study this term. Some may define power as “the ability to get what we want.” It is also referred to as “the ability to do things to influence others according to social communication with the purpose of getting the wished results.” The view of Peter Katzenstein emerges in his claim that “The power of civilizations corresponds to the strength of the country in correlation with the external environment as well as the extent of its anchoring in the external surroundings, as power differs in civilizations between hard and soft power in accordance to the actors controlling it”¹ In the context of Peter Katzenstein's view, soft power also emerges as one of the topics of the ongoing academic debate since this term has become one of the most important concepts on which scholars and actors in the field of foreign politics rely; Which is defined by “Joseph Nye” as “the ability to influence others and obtain favorable results through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or compulsion”². Another definition, according to Colin S. Gray, soft power is “the ability to achieve influence by means other than military and economic.”³

1. Conceptual introduction

Since 1990, the year Joseph Nye coined the term soft power for the first time, the concept has evolved from simply addressing the qualitative dimension to an attempt to measure it quantitatively. In 2010, Joseph Nye published a book entitled: “The Future of Power,” where he made contributions to add a quantitative dimension of soft power through his attempt to design a model for the transfer of basic resources, that include culture, legitimate values, and policies, a positive local model, a successful economy and a competent army, according to what he refers to skilled transfer strategies.

Transfer strategies rely on the primary resources for soft power transfer, in addition to resources specifically destined to employ and transfer soft power; Which include national intelligence services, information agencies, public diplomacy, exchange programs, aid, and training programs, these resources produce a variety of policy tools, that consequently simulate negative or positive responses depending on the context, goal, and attributes of energy transfer strategy and results in the outcomes that represent behaviors. It is divided into two types, general and specific.⁴

1.1-Measuring soft power

The measurement of soft power depends on two methods: the first; traditional, implicates the measures of interdependence in many international issues, education, and culture; In contrast to the second, non-traditional method that tracks digital content, as it relies on a data set to measure soft power, which has multiple sources such as the economic dimension,

¹ Joseph.S.Nye, The Future of Power,(New York: Public Affairs, 2011),p 5.

² Joseph Nye, « Soft Power: The Origins and Political Progress of The Concept », Palgrave Communication, I 8 (Feb.2017),p 2.

³ Colin.S Gray, Hard and Soft Power the Utility of Military Force as an Instrument of Policy in the 21ST Century (U S A :Strategic Study Institute, 2011), p41

⁴ Joseph, Nye, The Future of Power, (New York: Public Affairs,2010), p.64-68.

according to tracking the national GDP, for instance. The effort to measure soft power contributes to the diplomatic dimension as a tool in the foreign policy of countries, also it can be perceived as a factor of success in the diplomatic endeavors in addition to other reasons, including military power in the context of coercion, economic power on the payments angle and diplomatic skills concerning the psychological dimension of the human resource.¹

Tracing the concept of soft power since it was first proposed by "Joseph Nye" in 1990 highlights the attempt to rely on the quantitative dimension in relying on many models in order to measure the soft power of countries, as the first model in this regard was presented by "Jonathan McClory" in 2005; In which he relied on the latest publications of Joseph Nye at the time: "The Future of Power" (2004). The ensuing years witnessed many attempts to measure the countries' soft power as an indicator of the soft power of rapid growth markets and the global index of soft power and witnessed a discrepancy between relying on it and criticizing it in academic circles and decision-making around the world.

In the context of measuring the soft power of countries, three main models draw attention. The first is McClure's model for measuring the soft power of countries, (Soft power 30) as the first model for measuring and classifying the first thirty countries in the world according to their soft power. The second is the Soft Power Index model for rapid growth markets issued in partnership between Ernst Young and The Russian Skolkovo Institute, and the latest global index of soft power issued by Brand Finance, there are many commonalities between these models, often criticized, that can be summarized as follows:

- Focusing on the sources and neglecting behaviors and not addressing the strategies of converting resources into behaviors within the attempt to measure the soft power of countries. Measuring the sources alone does not ensure their good employment. Rather, the sources of soft power must be measured and the extent of their employment so that the extent of the country's soft power can be identified; Power is measured through the results it produces, not according to the accumulation and components. For example, the multiplicity in UNESCO's World Heritage classification does not guarantee their proper exploitation in the context of the country's soft power. In lieu, many factors are involved in the context of its employment. The Bamiyan Buddha statues in Afghanistan are classified as World Heritage by UNESCO. However, they are not employed within the Afghan soft power, due to many reasons, foremost of which is the religious ideological dimension, which sees it as blasphemy, instead of considering it as a source of tourism and presenting an image of the country in the international arena.
- The validity of the hypothesis formulated by Cronbach and Mehl based on the nominal network, i.e.; the presentation of the idea or the measurement model is in line with the full meaning of the concept according to a set of laws, divided into two types: the first governs the relationship of the term adoption in the context of its interaction with the rest of the variables, where the second relates to Building a term network with empirical observations or findings. In the same order, it is referred to the congruence of the theory and the instrument called operational validity, which indicates the

¹ Irene S. Wu, « Measuring Soft Power », Wilson Center, (April 2020), p. 1.

correspondence level between the measurement instrument of the scientific knowledge and understanding of the construction, where accurate conceptualization is of great importance in increasing the measurement validity.

1.2- Sources and behaviors of soft power

Joseph Nye's coin of the term soft power relies on behaviors and sources. Methodologically speaking, the focus on the sources and neglect of the behaviors, represents an imbalance in the validity of building models based on the mismatch between the origin and components of the term vis-a-vis the design and method of measuring models.

The extent of attractiveness: soft power depends on attractiveness instead of coercion that characterizes hard power. However, the various models of measuring soft power depend on variables that do not constitute a factor of attraction, but rather enter into an ideological framework and a political context such as the CO₂ emissions variable that constitutes an ideological and political aspect related to the environmental and ecological dimension, as CO₂ emissions will not bring tourists to the country nor will not constitute a factor of admiration for the country also it will not strengthen its position in the international scene. On the contrary, it will remain just a title for a limited policy and ideology, in contrast to the priority represented by the economic dimension at the expense of the ecological dimension. for instance, the Chinese soft power that relies on the Economic magnitude versus a lack of focus on the environmental dimension.

Consulting institutions: Concerning various sources of models for measuring the soft power of countries, all of them are consulting institutions in the economic field, which constitutes the priority of the marketing dimension over the academic one, which constitutes the origin and derivation of the term soft power. Therefore, the purpose of measuring the soft power of countries is the financial benefit taking into account the counseling financier at the expense of the academic and practical context for measuring the soft power of countries. The greater the satisfaction, the greater the payment and the request for more consultations, especially in the arrangement of countries according to their soft power measurement, issued by the Thirtieth Soft Power Measurement Model, and published in Forbes magazine as propaganda to the countries, rather than measurement accuracy. Otherwise, how can a country like the Netherlands outperform China and India, despite the great differences in the interaction in the international psyche according to the use of soft power?

- Western liberalism: considering the variables in soft power measurement models, most of them depend on liberal thinking, which includes basically the Western world: the United States of America and Western European countries, leaving the rest of the countries that have succeeded to a large extent in employing soft power in their foreign policies, such as China, for example. Therefore, the employment of soft power according to the factor of attraction is not only limited to the Western liberal mind but also includes countries where the variables of Western thought in them related to human rights and gender...etc represent a pressure factor than an attraction factor. Rather, it limits the attractiveness of its soft power within the Western world and increases it, especially in the Third World, which also suffers from pressures related to the variables of Western thinking. The world today is changing. Western liberal control is no longer decisive. In fact, it has become the context of interaction between

marketing ideas and pressure, in addition to the priority of the economy over the ideological and military determinants under modern globalization.

2. Mesuring India soft power

India constitutes an interesting model in its endeavor to employ soft power in its foreign policy, especially since 2014, the year Narendra Modi came to power in New Delhi, where he relied on many sources. Hence, we seek, to determine the areas of failure and the elements of success in the strategy of employing Indian soft power in its foreign policy. depends on the dynamic represented in the possibility of relying on variables and the ability to change them according to the contribution of researchers and according to the specificity of the country whose soft power is to be measured.

2.1- Variables for measuring Indian soft power

we relied on 42 variables that represent the Indian attraction factors, which are divided into three main related indicators: soft assets, soft employment, and soft achievement; illustrated in the following table and graphic curves:

Application of the M W M model to measure soft power employment in India

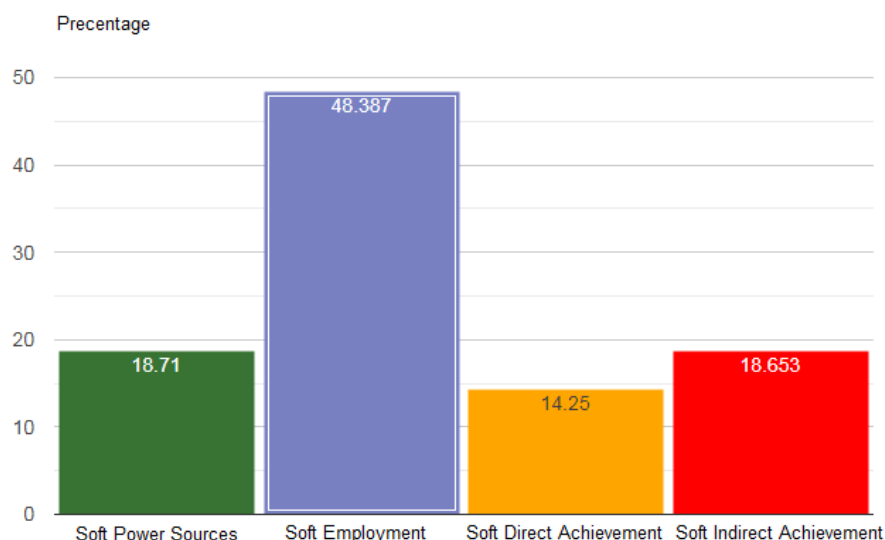
1. Soft National Assets	2. Soft Employment	3. Soft achievement	
4. 1- Number of places designated by UNESCO 5. The value is 136 out of 277 in Asia and 1154 in the world Source:UNESCO statistics	6. 1- The number of arrivals to the country for tourism is 57.1% in 2019 7. The source is the World Bank 8. Air India Quality 9. 3 stars out of 5 10. Source Sky Trax	11. The number of tourists in India 12. Value 17914000 in 2019 13. The source: the World Bank	14. /
15. 2- cooking 16. Value 4 globally 17. Source: INDIAN FOOD SERVICES INDUSTRY	18. 4 dishes in the world's top 100 19. Source: Tasteatlas	20. The growth of the restaurant sector by 22% 21. Source: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry	22. /
23. 3- Language 24. Value 10 globally 25. Source: power language index	26. 1- The number of museums in the top 100 in the world 27. value 0 28. Source: The Art	47. Language services market 0 48. Source: Nimdzi 49. The number of films that made	52.

	Newspaper 29. 2- The number of universities ranked in the top 100 in the world 30. value 0 31. Source: The Center for World University Rankings 32. 3- The number of scientific articles 33. Value 13578779 34. Source: National Science Foundation reports and US science and engineering indicators 35. 4- The number of thinking centers 36. Value 612 ranked 3 in the world 37. Source: The comprehensive report for the classification of study centers for the year 2020 38. 5- Patents as a percentage of GDP 39. Value 19,454 in 2019 40. The source is the World Bank	the most profits 50. 5 51. Source: Box Office Mojo	
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	41. 6- The number of foreign students in the country, the value is 49,000, within India, .461,000 42. Source: UNESCO 43. 7- The number of films is 1890 44. Source Numbers 45. 8- Music Market 0 46. Source 2021 Global Music Report		
53. 4- Internet 54. Value 41% of the population 55. Source: World Bank statistics	56. 1- Facebook follow-up to the head of the executive branch: 46 862 236 followers 57. The source: Facebook	58. /	59. Charismatic legitimacy Yes1 No 0 60. India1
61. 5- History 62. Is India a colonial country? 63. colony 1	64. /	65. /	66. Dependency 1
67. 1- human rights 68. The value is 67 partial freedoms 69. Source: Freedom" House	70. 1- information and communication technology 71. India ranked 134 72. Source 73. United Nations International Telecommunication Union 74. 75. 2-Sport 4	77.	78. Commitment and Impact 1 79. Lack of commitment and pressure 0 80. India 0 81. Value 71 since 1948 82. Source
83. 4- Economic Freedom 84. Value 131 globally 85. Source: Heritage			

86. 5- Corruption 87. The value is ranked 85 88. Source: Transparency International	76. Multiple sources		
89. 6- Gender 90. Value 0.820 91. Source: United Nations statistics			
92. 2- Peace missions 93. 5548 94. Source: United Nations statistics	95. 2- Peace missions 96. yes 1 97. Multiple sources	98.	
99. 4- The number of diplomatic missions in the world 100. The value ranks 11 in g 20 ;3 in Asia with 123 embassies and 54 consulates 101. Source: Lowy Institute	102. 1- Democratic System 1 103. The ratio 104. 2- The ruling class for a government coalition 0 105. The ratio 106. 3- An absolute majority 1 107. The ratio 108. 4- The extent of reliance on soft power in the party's program 109. Ruler 1 110. The ratio 111. 5- The extent of reliance on soft power in the official discourse of the	112. foreign direct investment 113. 64362000 114. source: the International Monetary Fund	115. The foreign policy guarantees a soft dimension in dealing 116. yes 1

	ruling class		
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2.2- Analysis of variables

In the area of the agenda as a strategy for transforming the sources of Indian soft power into behaviors, we note that the employment of Indian soft power constitutes a governmental program adopted in India's interaction towards its external affairs on the one hand, ensuring the employment of soft power, the program of the ruling Indian People's Party "Bharatiya Janata" in Hindi, on the other hand, the soft power practices embedded in the officials' speeches, this employment is accompanied by decisions towards employing Indian soft power, materialized by the establishment of a MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES, Ayurvedic Medicine and Yoga MINISTRY. Indeed, India has succeeded in registering these variables at the United Nations

The rest of the variables within the soft employment index remain negative, due to the fact that the Indian agenda does not focus on the interaction in the employment of Indian soft power, mainly due to ideological reasons that the ruling party in India and the practices of the Indian ruling class have a religious background related to the Indian Hindu religion, which is a combination of traditions that are related to a group of texts called the Vedas¹, as these traditions represent the oldest practices that were prevalent in India, including Ayurvedic medicine, ancient Indian cuisine, and yoga. This explains the establishment of the Ministry of Yoga (Ayush), mainly occupied by Hindu traditions, practices, and rituals as tools for employing Indian soft power and neglecting the rest of the instruments that can be of utility for India in employing its soft power, such as movies, music, museums, research, in which India ranks low in the classification of relevant international indicators.

The Indian historical legacy related to the colonial past constitutes one of the most important obstacles to employing Indian soft power, which is embodied in being affected by the dependency within which India interacts in many areas related to language, art, and cultural

¹ Agarwal, R. "Hinduism". In Athyal, J.M (ed). *Religions in Southeast Asia: An Encyclopedia of Faiths and Cultures*. ABC-CLIO, (2015), p.2.

heritage, that further limits the activation of these elements as sources of Indian soft power. with regard to the Indian soft assets representing the sources of Indian soft power, most of them are negative, with the exception of Indian cuisine, peace missions, and diplomatic delegations around the world. This is due to the dependency that limits the use of the Indian cultural heritage as an instrument for employing Indian soft power, which extends back thousands of years, in opposition to the interaction according to the remnants of the former British colonialism such as language, customs, and social discrimination, considered mandatory to achieve development and promote India's image according to the British model primarily and not according to the priority of Indian national components.

The Indian demographic and developmental challenge constitute one of the biggest obstacles to employing Indian soft power as concerns neglecting the attraction factor in political values, which hinders the employment of Indian soft power. As for the Indian federal system, which is characterized by management at a regional rather than centralized level, what constitutes another quarrel in priorities between the central government in New Delhi and the states' governments, in terms of political values associated with the promotion of India's image abroad in line with human rights, economic freedom, gender equality, and anti-corruption efforts. These values are the last preoccupation of Indian officials in the Indian state governments, as testify the parties' programs, focused solely on the developmental dimensions and fighting poverty in their electoral campaigns.

Direct soft achievement constitutes an indicator of the country's ability to transform its resources into behaviors, on the one hand, on the other hand, it contributes to the assessment of the country's performance in employing its soft power numerically and in the short term every year. Concerning the measurement of the Indian soft power, the soft direct achievement indicator is negative as a result of the negative soft assets index, as well as Indian soft employment. Considering that, the variable: number of tourists arriving in India constitutes a negative value despite their estimated number of 17 million tourists. If we compare this number with the number of tourists visiting France, estimated at more than 117 million tourists, India's number is 10 times less, despite India's tourism capacities such as tourist attraction sites and cuisine, for example. also, in our assessment of the Indian tourism sector, supposed to attract and promote the country's image and contribute to the national economy, India is yet to be a global tourist destination, as an embodiment of a failure to employ Indian soft power according to this variable, which requires in the future a further since it is one of the economic assets in our time.

Dependency is one of the most significant barriers to employing Indian soft power, as seen by the negative variables of the language services sector, where no Indian translation company ranks among the top 100 companies in the world. The second variable is the number of most profitable movies: only 5 Indian movies in figures among the top 200 most profitable movies in the world. In our assessment of these two variables, we note the difference between India's national production of scientific materials related to scientific research and the entertainment field, such as movies and music, and its lagging ranks at the external level, as this represents a failure in the strategy of transferring resources and assets of Indian soft power into behaviors, the fact that negatively affect the employment of Indian soft power at the external level.

The foreign direct investment variable indicates the country's attractiveness and its economic image, this variable, represents a positive value of 64 billion dollars compared to the highest

country attracting foreign direct investments: China with 212 billion dollars. This fact constitutes one of the biggest advantages of Indian soft power employment, as the latter succeeded under the leadership of the "Narendra Modi" government in promoting the image of India and attracting capital as well as investments, in the same context we also note the positive speculation concerning the growth of the restoration market with an estimated value of 20% in early 2022 despite the global pandemic. These findings represent the Narendra Modi government's particular interest in traditions, particularly Indian food, due to their religious ideology dimension tied to the Hindu background.

The indirect soft achievement aims to identify the elements that limit the countries' soft power employment through the researcher's answer to questions related to variables that allow determining the obstacles to employing the soft power of the country under study. In the study of Indian soft power employment, the indirect soft achievement indicator expressed a negative value, where we identified three variables that constitute an obstacle to the employment of Indian soft power: dependency, lack of influence, and commitment to political values related to human rights, as a result of this third variable related to India's status as a country pressured by countries and organizations that defend the aforementioned political values; What constitutes an obstacle to India's employment of its soft power in its foreign policy, in the charismatic legitimacy variables. The fact that Indian foreign policy falls under the soft dimension, these two variables constitute a positive element in employing Indian soft power by providing the attraction factor of the political leader represented in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alongside with the foreign policy's reliance on employing soft power as a governmental program for the ruling authority in India is embodied in its endeavor to promote various Indian soft power instruments outside the borders and within international organizations, especially the United Nations.

Conclusion:

Soft power constitutes one of the most important terms that academics, researchers, decision-makers and their advisors rely on in the foreign policy of countries in our time. This term has witnessed a great development since it was first launched in 1990 by Joseph Nye in the context of highlighting the change of American power as an answer to the contribution of Paul Kennedy related to the decline and demise of American power, through the contributions of highlighting its components from sources and behaviors to attempts to measure the extent of its employment. This development was accompanied by intellectual debates about the term and concept of soft power, whose plurality reflected the multiplicity of vision and background of specialists in the field of foreign policy.

After the end of the Cold War, international interaction according to the ideological conflict was replaced by an interaction according to the economic dimension, as a group of countries appeared in this regard, characterized by great economic capabilities and investment opportunities, dubbed the emerging powers to which India belongs, as it seeks, in its interaction in its foreign policy, to employ its soft power. In this context, we reached a set of conclusions in our study of India's employment of its soft power in its foreign policy as an emerging power, we summarize as follows:

- Indian soft power constitutes the government agenda of the current Indian Prime Minister "Narendra Modi" through its focus on the religious dimension related to the Hindu traditions, in line with the use of instruments related to the ancient Indian customs and

traditions, which include yoga, cooking, and Ayurvedic medicine, to which "Narendra Modi" established a ministry in order to promote and deal with every single one of them with a view of employ the civilizational aspects in Indian soft power within its foreign policy, however the effort to interact according to the ideological dimension in employing Indian soft power neglected to utilize other attractive tools related to soft power, foremost of which are values Politics, music, language...etc., which led to limitations in the employment of Indian soft power compared to other Asian countries headed by China.

Notwithstanding the rich and ancient Indian history and civilization, India has not been able to get rid of its colonial past, which gave birth to a dependency that is manifested in the limited interaction, according to its authenticity on the international scene, which is evident in the confined use of its language, and the limited distribution of its films and music in the world despite its annual production, the fact that results in the limitation of the attraction factor according to the Indian culture.

The internal developmental priority, along with external security challenges, constitute the main factors to impact negatively the Indian soft power efforts and designs in foreign policy, as it expresses the social concerns that form the backbone of Indian political life. The general and predominant practices in India focus internally on attracting voters more than externally focusing on attracting and influencing other countries within the framework of employing Indian soft power in its foreign policy.

Soft power consists of sources and behaviors. In the case of India, it contains considerable soft assets that represent the sources of its soft power, jointly related to the civilizational, historical, and cultural dimensions. However, the strategy of transforming these sources into behaviors remains limited due to the imbalance in the utilization of Indian soft instruments moreover the neglect of other assets or in light of developmental priorities, security challenges, and dependency limitations that hinder the interaction as a function of India's originality.

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