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The Ascension of India to the Position of A Global Soft Power

Peer Amir Ahmad
Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Govt. Degree College Majalta, J&K.

*** Corresponding Author:**
Peer Amir Ahmad
rahieamir786@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

India's political impact is rising with its fast developing economy. The nation wants to improve its global position by using soft power techniques and resources. Drawing on its rich cultural legacy and old customs, India is creating its foreign policy—which also stresses democracy and religious diversity—by means of the diplomatic strategy of the country presently revolves around fostering and preserving friendly ties with other nations in order to boost national economy. Soft power—especially via culture and values—has become a necessary instrument as global power dynamics change. Particularly in the Pacific, India's policies provide a special chance to properly exploit this potential. The changing function of soft power in the twenty-first century has changed the way countries exercise power. Governments are obliged in a world becoming more linked to invest in both soft and hard power techniques in order to achieve their goals for foreign policy. Particularly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership changing popular attitudes on religious extremism both locally and globally, India is in a better position than ever to impact world events. Hindutva rights are helping India's soft power to be shaped as well. While hard power—which includes military or economic pressure—is defined as a nation's capacity to accomplish its foreign policy objectives without using force—soft power is the opposite. In the geopolitical setting of today, the efficient use of soft power—through media, public diplomacy, or cultural outreach—becomes very vital. India's cultural message and attempts to reflect ideals that appeal worldwide help explain why it is becoming a global soft power. India's increasing impact on global events is mostly derived from this mix of diplomatic, financial, and cultural initiatives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

India has the good fortune to possess a strong "Soft Power." India's unique cultural history of music, dance, drama, yoga, Ayurveda, and a tradition of absolute thinking, as well as its plurality, tolerance, and secularism, serve as the cornerstones of its soft power. This culture of abstract thought has given us a competitive edge in the modern world. A global power is one that has the ability to affect global governance and is required to maintain international order. The United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, China, and several others can legitimately be referred to as global powers due to their strategic and politico-economic clout. According to historical data, major powers have not at all acted softly during power disputes. In this power battle, softness might be seen of as the antithesis of assertiveness and activity. The phrase is frequently used to describe Indian foreign policy. The historical backdrop, geopolitical imperatives, and economic imperatives are all ignored by such a broad and basic categorization. However, because India is a regional power in South and South-East Asia, this cannot be true in the region, even though soft may be true globally. To ascertain whether India may become a global power due to its softness, a historical analysis of its regional rise, the inherent paradoxes, and its place on the international political landscape would be necessary.

Hard force results in submission, whilst soft power results in acceptance. The former is the basis of state power, whereas the latter contributes to its consolidation: History implies that a state can affect the world by using both forms of power in concert Influence". A medium power, India. The big countries, which control a significant role in international affairs and make important choices about the future and course of the global system Furthermore, it is not one of the lesser nations whose limited degree of foreign policy autonomy makes it susceptible to large power judgments. Indian military power is constrained by conventional capabilities.

Despite having the third largest armed forces behind China and the US, they are comparable to those of the major nations. Furthermore, in comparison to the five main countries, its long-range or quick deployment capabilities are constrained.

India, as a secular nation, has sometimes faced challenges in maintaining its unity. Despite being the most diverse country, the nation's togetherness and general brotherhood have kept us standing. In general, Indians are really kind people. We adore our enemies and enjoy our friends. This spirit of kindness and unity is deeply rooted in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, who emphasized nonviolence and harmony among all people. His philosophy of 'satyagraha'—the force of truth and nonviolent resistance—continues to inspire us to seek peaceful solutions and extend a hand of friendship, rather than resorting to conflict.

2. METHODOLOGY

In terms of providing evidence for the arguments it makes, the article takes a descriptive as well as an analytical approach. In order to accomplish this, it relies heavily on secondary sources, such as articles from newspapers and magazines, as well as investigation reports and a variety of other types of reports.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

These days, there is a lot of talk about India being a major or even global power, not so much in government circles as in the so-called "strategic community," with the ability and even responsibility to play an "important role" as a balancing power between major powers and as a "security provider" to others. The "strategic community" rather than government circles are paying a lot of attention to this issue. The primary objective of the study is to investigate and provide an explanation for India's rise to global soft power status.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Modern and culturally vibrant, India has long been employing "soft power" to shape the globe. India's culture naturally reflects this idea of soft power, which has traditionally welcomed individuals from

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many origins. India's cultural diversity and historical significance make it a desirable nation worldwide, motivating governments and people—especially in underdeveloped nations—to strive harder and look up India as a consistent and moral model. India's soft power derives from its aspirational goal of a pluralistic, liberal, nonviolent governance. Its soft power assets include in the worldwide attraction of its culture, arts, literature, music, dance, Ayurveda, and the legendary leaders of Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. Often connected with famous historical individuals like Ashoka, Buddha, and Gandhi, India is also recognised for its principles of peace, respect, and camaraderiness. With analogies to the great works of ancient Greece, Indian culture—including epic tales like the Mahabharata and Ramayana—has had a long impact.

India has been a haven for many groups, including Muslims, Christians, and Jews, therefore providing religious and cultural freedom throughout history. Celebrating its diverse civilisations and cultures, the nation's concept of "unity in diversity" keeps India appealing to people all over.

Beyond culture, India's soft power covers its economy, statecraft, and philosophy. India shared with the world the idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," (the world is one family), presented by the Upanishads. To affect surrounding areas, ancient Indian kings such as Chanakya used soft power techniques like alliances and non-aggression. Historically, India's colleges attracted intellectuals and researchers from all across the globe, therefore facilitating the worldwide information sharing.

India is becoming more and more important in current times, notably in Europe and Asia, in fields like yoga, spirituality, and movies. India's nonviolent resistance throughout its freedom war won it respect worldwide even though it has experienced several bloody battles throughout its history including British colonialism. India's economy suffered after independence, but it has subsequently surmounted obstacles and raised profile for helping nations in the Global South.

India’s soft power has also been a tool for building relationships, particularly through its secularism, liberalism, and inclusivity. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), led by India during the Cold War, promoted peace and cooperation between nations. India continues to emphasize these values; showing the world how to balance diversity and unity.The “Incredible India” tourism campaign and the "Brand India" initiative have played significant roles in boosting India’s image globally. These efforts, along with India's democratic values and involvement in global organizations like UNESCO, reflect its commitment to sharing its rich cultural heritage with the world.

India’s growing Diaspora, with over 20 million people living abroad, also contributes to its soft power. The Indian government has increasingly focused on soft power strategies, especially under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership. India’s use of soft power has extended into areas like space diplomacy with initiatives like the South Asia Satellite, which aims to assist South Asian countries with satellite services. India’s rise as a global power is partly due to its economy, growing military strength, and its soft power assets like its culture, values, and democracy. However, India faces challenges such as poverty, corruption, and gender inequality, which impact its soft power performance in global rankings. Still, India's growing influence and strategic use of soft power have helped it become a leading player on the world stage.

India is using its rich cultural heritage, diplomatic efforts, and soft power resources to improve its global standing, despite some internal challenges. By leveraging its strengths, such as its diverse culture, spiritual influence, and growing global presence, India is positioning itself to become a major power in the future.

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4. CONCLUSION

India has to first pinpoint the features that distinguishes it from other nations if it wants to restore its national image. Ancient Indian spirituality and wisdom should persuade other countries of India's capacity to be a major leader on the global scene. It is fascinating that India's ability to present a "better story" has not notably helped to get the intended results. If India used its soft power potential, it would have more credibility worldwide. Its neighbours would also help it to become well-known and prosper abroad. India presents chances to solidify its position as a "growing global soft power" and open the path for it to become a "soft power superpower" in the twenty-first century. These opportunities and potentials arise within the framework of a multi-polarity global order growingly stable. India has done well in technological development; it is not a wealthy nation overall. It cannot be a suitable model of how other nations may enhance their social life as this nation is not rich. Unquestionably, the importance of India's economy has increased throughout time; nonetheless, this has not been sufficient to erase poverty from Indian society. Although India still lacks even the most basic education for a sizable portion of its people, on the one hand the nation boasts some of the top colleges of technology and business in the world. India's capacity to project soft power suffers from the intricacy of its social structure. This is particularly true for stories about rape and other types of violence against women that are ubiquitous in the media as well as for the patriarchy and conservatism that define Indian culture and the practice of arranged weddings. A major stain on the image of our country as one that is peaceful and accepting of all religions is pogroms and riots sparked on by religious disagreements. The fact that state officials have been found guilty of breaching human rights adds even more to this negative perspective of India, which defines the limits of its soft power. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; sometimes known as the Indian People's Party), which has been in power in India since the 2014 elections, makes very clear in their campaign program that members of the ruling class in India understand the need of using soft power. Emphasising the use of soft power in foreign policy, this manifesto declared the adoption of a more active diplomatic approach, especially with regard to its spiritual, cultural, and philosophical aspects. This manifesto also declared the adoption of a more aggressive diplomatic approach. Among the various goals of this governmental initiative was to raise India's profile by using the power of what are often referred to as the "5Ts": history, talent, tourism, trade, and technology.

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