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# The Ascension of India to the Position of a Global Soft Power

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**Fatima Akther\***

*\*M.A Political Science Student Department of Politics and Governance Central university of Ganderbal Kashmir India.*

*Corresponding Email: \*fatimabhat067@gmail.com*

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*Abstract: India's political aspirations are rising along with its economy, which is seeing phenomenal growth. By utilizing resources and soft power tools, the nation is attempting to strengthen its position in the world. India is relearning this art by referring to its ancient traditions and drawing on its vast cultural heritage. The state's armory also includes references to democracy and religious diversity. The state's foreign policy has also been refocused on fostering and preserving positive relationships with other nations in order to assist the state's economic growth. Soft power tools are becoming increasingly important, particularly when it comes to culture and values. When combined with Pacific policies, this has created an excellent opportunity to use soft power. In terms of how governments define and use their authority, the power dynamics of soft nation-states have significantly changed in the twenty-first century. Governments are forced to invest substantially in both their soft and hard power matrices because the political world of today is becoming more linked. Due to the status of global politics, India now has a stronger possibility than ever before of playing a significant role in international affairs. The election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has altered public perceptions of the perils of religious militarism in India and throughout the world. Due to the rising popularity of Hindutva rights, these rights have grown in popularity. The capacity of a country to carry out its foreign policy goals and objectives without using force is referred to as "soft power." It remains a crucial component of foreign policy, with or without the application of "hard power," which can refer to techniques like the use of force or other very effective diplomatic measures. International and bilateral diplomacy can make use of hard power to tell a bigger story. This broad subject involves economic, social, and even civilizational factors in equal measure. Everything begins with messaging, which can be done through normal channels like news conferences and speeches or through the many media outlets that are available in today's hyper-connected society. The main focus of this article is the ascension of India to the position of a global soft power.*



***Keywords: Soft Power, Culture, Foreign Policies, Diplomacy.***

## **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.

Being a secular state, India has occasionally had a hard time upholding its integrity. Nevertheless, 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. Call it the Mahatma Gandhi teachings or Gandhigiri in its current incarnation, but compared to people in other countries, Americans are not as disobedient. Our government never tightens its belt to start a fight; instead, it always extends its hands in kindness.

## **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.

### **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.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

India is a modern, enlightened nation with a long tradition of soft power. The nation recognizes the significance of cultural participation and makes comparatively insignificant additional efforts to ensure that its culture captivates people from all over the world. The following concept of soft power is novel and, at its core, natural. It is in line with India's long history as a place where people of all backgrounds can interact with one another and learn from each other. When developing countries around the world observed India's position, it motivated them to work harder because they had the sense that India was a reliable and upright hovering sphere. India's position inspired them to work harder because they regarded India as a reliable and upright hovering sphere.

Soft power brought these impressions with it. India has a hopeful vision of a government that is reasonably pluralistic, non-violent, and liberal, and that it will take a leadership role in the world that is not threatening. An astonishing variety of soft power assets, including India's appeal to the world's population and the arts of literature, music, dance, the software industry, and Ayurveda, among others, are provided by well-known individuals like Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. These benefits are a part of what makes India appealing to people all over the world.. These resources enhance the positive perception of India. Mentioning Ashoka, Buddha, and Gandhi as outstanding examples of how the Indian culture strongly emphasizes the idea of respecting one another, upholding peace, and being comradely is a widespread practice. This is due to the fact that all three of these figures exemplified these values. The great mythological epics of the Mahabharata and Ramayana, for example, are sometimes likened to the major works of ancient Greek literature, such as the Odyssey and Iliad. Between the years 1 and 1000 AD, India's GDP was higher than China's and earned it the nickname "Golden Bird." China's GDP was lower throughout this time period. In the end, this resulted in the migration of traders, conquerors, and people with names like "Alexander the Great" to India. Over the course of several centuries, India has provided Jews, Christians, Muslims, and members of a number of other faiths with a safe haven as well as religious and cultural freedom. India's history and culture are her gifts to the world. They show how India's stories have changed over time and how the country has been able to accept many religions while keeping its own history and culture. The concept of "unity in diversity," which refers to India's vast collection of cultures and civilizations, serves as the foundation for India's global representation. This concept is the reason why India continues to be an attractive destination



for people from all over the world. The rootlets of gentle power penetrate extremely far. Evaluations of India's "soft power" take into account the country's beneficial connections with other nations, as well as its religious and ethno-linguistic traditions. Everything in Indian culture seems interesting to those from other cultures looking in from the outside. In addition to "soft power," India is committed to expanding its influence on the world stage through business and statecraft. The Upanishads introduced "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" to both India and the rest of the globe. An important ancient Indian philosopher named Chanakya employed grants, settlements, and non-aggression pacts to influence his neighbors. This shows how important soft power was to the ancient Indian government. India has a long and interesting history, and as a result, there have been many academics, intellectuals, and scholars who have devoted their lives to making new fields of knowledge. These people have created a pearl of wisdom that has spread far beyond India to other countries. India's universities were the most important places of soft power and cultural synthesis in the past. They were where a lot of scholars and students from all over the world came to study and learn. India's reputation as a mystical civilization brings in academics, intellectuals, and professionals from many different fields from all over the world. Because of this, many different philosophies have grown up. Indian civilization and culture, which includes Indian food, religions, festivals, spirituality, yoga, movies, and music, have a bigger impact on the world market, especially in Asia, West Asia, Europe, and Africa. This is especially true in Europe, where people are becoming more interested in yoga.

India has been at the center of numerous violent conflicts since the beginning of recorded history, many of which included colonial British rulers and the different ancient Indian kings. In spite of this, India was thrilled and proud of the passive resistance strategy it had employed to win its freedom. Britain only contributed 3% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at the time the British first arrived in India, whereas India contributed 20%. However, in 1947, during India's struggle for independence from British rule, when the British left the nation, the GDP was computed backwards. India was a country with a weak economy almost immediately after achieving independence. This was because a colonial power that had dominated the area for more than 300 years had completely drained its resources. India has been praised widely for its success in achieving independence from colonial rule and for defending the interests of countries in the global South, despite the inherent challenges of tremendous suffering and the diversity of many cultural traditions. India's rise to soft power can be attributed to its capacity to forge relationships with other nations, deepen those relationships, and heal wounds brought on by political strife and historical events. India supported its foreign policy in the 1990s by utilizing soft power. It additionally cultivated serene turn of events and kept up with great relations with its neighbors with an end goal to keep up with its authenticity in South Asia. It is evident that India's aims of secularism, liberalism, and cultural inclusivity are more vital in today's restless society since they have been ingrained in her vast social and cultural past for millennia. This demonstrates that India's aims of secularism, liberalism, and cultural tolerance are increasingly significant. This is the source of the soft power that India currently wields. An additional component of India's soft power in a variety of global locations is a practical experience of south-south collaboration and persistent solidarity with underprivileged nations. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Gandhi's nonviolent ideas, Nehru's Five Postulates of Panchsheel



(Peaceful Coexistence), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), all of which were supported globally, were instrumental in the formation of global associations during the height of the cold war. When Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first prime minister, he was told that the country was going to be a big and good player in international affairs. Soon after Jawaharlal Nehru took office, this was communicated to him. Throughout the process, this was a promise that was kept. India is frequently cited as an example of a nation that is at the forefront of efforts to foster culture, dialogue, and synergy in the ongoing discussion of global politics. The spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, believes that India's long history of religious tolerance can serve as a model for the rest of the world. A greater degree of interconnectedness between the various nations of the world has resulted from the recent economic liberalization and globalization that have occurred. This has brought about a more noteworthy level of intricacy in the worldwide economy. It is now common knowledge that a nation's overall power relies heavily on soft power. It has the potential to improve a nation's ability to shape its ties with other nations and the cohesiveness and resolve of its residents. Additionally, it has the potential to improve a region's sense of community and resolve. India's capacity to make significant strategic decisions and its use of soft power has both grown significantly in recent years.

The "Brand India" effort could not have been as successful as it is today without the significant contribution of the Incredible India tourism campaign. The effort that was made to attract attention and to promote India as a good reason for investment was given the tagline "Brand India," which is a phrase that represents the endeavor. The campaign that was started by India was given the tagline "Brand India." It is conceivable for India to maintain its position among the nations that have a significant potential for soft power while also maintaining its current standing. People from all over the world are drawn to the nation because of its robust democracy, autonomous judiciary, and the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly progressive and independent media. Additionally, India is working toward gaining worldwide recognition for programs that are particularly unique. These initiatives demonstrate India's connection to the brilliant civilizations of her past and are a representation of India's effort to gain global acknowledgement of her achievements. India has been a member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for a considerable amount of time, and the nation has historically been and continues to be an ardent supporter of the sharing of cultures and civilizations.

India's soft power has the capacity to enhance the country's image and carve out a unique niche in the contemporary international order. Soft power has the ability to enhance India's image, given that hard power cannot be deployed outside of a frontier or territory. The expressions of India's soft power have advanced to the point that they have contributed to the widespread belief that the nation is substantially more powerful now than it was decades ago. This concept has contributed to the prevalent impression that the nation is substantially more strong at this time. Due to the immense appeal they exude in the countries where they now reside, members of the Indian diaspora have the potential to play a big role in expanding the country's soft power. There are around 20 million Indians living and working in groups considered to be part of the diaspora around the world. The United Nations (UN) estimates that India will exceed China in terms of population size by the year 2024, becoming the



country with the largest population. In addition, the Indian diaspora will continue to grow, which is a tremendous benefit that helps the country project a positive image to the rest of the world.

India's soft power has developed thanks to the various approaches that have been set up by the country's various state run administrations. The government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is currently implementing novel soft power strategies in conjunction with innovative diplomatic strategies. In recent years, this has resulted in novel and intriguing trends in Indian diplomacy. In the modern era, the nation-state of India has utilized its economic support and soft power assets, such as its diaspora, yoga, and Buddhism, to achieve diplomatic victories and advance the country's goals. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has decided that it is crucial to construct a "soft power matrix" so that the effectiveness of India's diplomatic efforts can be evaluated. Based on what has been said thus far, when the MEA's primary objective is achieved, one of the most critical test conditions will be met.. Also, shows like "Know India" and "Destination India" are now available for anyone to watch and take part in. Cultural institutions like the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organized the first-ever nationwide conference in 2019 as part of the "Destination India" project. India decided to host this convention in 2019 because it believes it can significantly advance its objective of being a global knowledge society leader. Since COVID-19, India's "Namaste diplomacy" and "Medical diplomacy" have received a lot of attention. India's influence over space politics and technology is an additional, mostly induced form of soft power that can be used in many different ways. India's regional diplomacy has moved into space with the launch of its GSAT-9 satellite, also known as the South Asia Satellite. India has made this first move toward becoming a member of the International Space Station. The primary objective of the mission of the satellite was to assist South Asian nations in acquiring services that can be performed in space.

India is an ancient civilization that is now home to the largest democracy in the world, a secular outlook, and a rapidly expanding market to the point where it has surpassed France and the United Kingdom to become the fifth most prosperous economy in 2019. In addition, one of the largest religious minorities in the world can be found in India. India will need to strengthen its foreign policy and diplomacy in order to forge multilateral and bilateral collaborations with a variety of nations in order to improve its overall communication, tourism, cultural influence, and soft power. India will need to strengthen its diplomacy and foreign policy to accomplish this. One way to accomplish this is by expanding the countries with which it has working relationships. As an outcome of this development, India's overall correspondence capacities, the travel industry, social impact, and by and large delicate power will all grow. India's attractive culture, social values, and foreign policy, in addition to the country's growing economy and robust military, will position it better to join Asia's great powers. India will be in a stronger position as a result of this than it would have been had it not been for the country's economic growth and military might. By the year 2025, it is projected that India will have attained the status of a superpower. Comparing China's communist and aggressive system to India's democratic system, which provides India an advantage in terms of soft power, is like comparing apples to oranges. Since the beginning of the previous decade, India has made considerable strides toward improving the vital resources it utilizes in the field of public diplomacy. In order to accomplish this, it has relied



on strategies that are both time-honored and innovative in order to construct and maintain its soft power.

India has a lot of soft power resources, but it lacks the institutions necessary to use soft power to advance its own national interests abroad. Due to significant issues like corruption, poverty, and violence against women, India has not performed well in the categories of national attraction factors; aversion to doing business; pollution in the cities; discrimination due to caste; and, to name just a few, gender inequality. There are also a lot of things going on that are helping India's Soft Power 30 index performance, which doesn't look that great. One of these reasons is India's bias toward the West, which puts it behind other countries with advanced economies. The index is a composite pattern that makes a unique score for each country by putting together data from a wide range of soft power traits. Each country obtains a unique score. If a country does worse on any of the many sub-indices that are measured for the report, its overall score will go down. This doesn't always mean that a country in this situation doesn't have enough strength or tools to show off its soft power assets.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, if India wishes to revive its national image, it must first identify the qualities that set it apart from other countries. The spirituality and wisdom of ancient Indian culture should convince other nations of India's potential to play a significant leadership role on the international stage. It is interesting that India's capacity to tell a "better story" has not significantly aided in achieving the desired outcomes.. India would have a better reputation around the world if it used its soft power potential. It would also gain popularity with its neighbors and succeed internationally as a result. India has the potential to cement its position as a "growing global soft power" and pave the way for it to become a "soft power superpower" in the twenty-first century, as well as the opportunities to do so. These possibilities and potentials exist in the context of a multi polar world order that is becoming more stable.. India is not a rich country, even though it has done well in technical growth. Because it is not a wealthy country, it can't be a good example of how other countries can improve their social lives. The significance of India's economy has unquestionably grown over the years, yet this has not been enough to eradicate poverty from Indian society.

On the one hand, India is home to some of the best universities of technology and management in the world; on the other hand, the country is still unable to deliver even the most fundamental education to a significant section of its population. The complexity of India's social system is a problem for the country's ability to project soft power. This is especially true for reports that are commonplace in the media about rape and other forms of violence against women, as well as the patriarchy and conservatism that are prevalent in Indian society and the practice of arranged marriages. Pogroms and riots brought on by religious differences are a significant stain on the reputation of our nation as one that is peaceful and tolerant of other faiths. This negative view of India, which defines the boundaries of its soft power, is further contributed to by the fact that state authorities have been found guilty of violating human rights. It was made abundantly obvious in the electoral manifesto of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; also known as the Indian People's Party), which



has been in power in India since the 2014 elections, that members of the governing class in India are aware of the necessity of employing soft power. This manifesto emphasized the importance of soft power in foreign policy and announced the adoption of a more active style of diplomacy, particularly making use of and emphasizing its spiritual, cultural, and philosophical dimension. Additionally, this manifesto announced the adoption of a more active style of diplomacy. This political program had several objectives, one of which was to improve India's reputation by leveraging the influence of what are known as the "5Ts": tradition, talent, tourism, trade, and technology.

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