

Enumerating Cultural Resources of Pakistan's Soft Power: Potentials and Prospects

Khalid Saifullah*
Irfan Hussain Qaisrani**

ABSTRACT

The evolving need for cooperation between the states to address complex issues such as climate change, cyber-attacks, economic depressions and pandemics has enhanced the importance of soft power. Since the start of 20th Century, non-western scholars belonging to China, Russia, Turkey, Iran, Japan and India have started indigenising the concept and resources of soft power. However, little has been explored about the soft power of Pakistan. Using document analysis – both primary and secondary – as a methodological tool, this study tries to fill this gap by exploring the cultural resources of Pakistan. It borrows the definition and framework of soft power proposed by Joseph Nye and contextualises it for Pakistan. The study classifies culture as a primary resource of Pakistan's soft power. The study argues that Pakistan has ample cultural resources of soft power and is struggling to optimally utilise these to achieve national interests. However, despite these

* PhD Scholar in International Relations at Bahria University, Islamabad. Email: khalidsaif1@hotmail.com

** Senior Assistant Professor at Bahria University, Islamabad. Email: iqaisarani.buic@bahria.edu.pk

initiatives, the country still requires innovative strategies to utilise these resources in pursuance of the objectives defined by its foreign policy.

Introduction

Soft power as a concept is becoming “more relevant than ever”¹ in diplomatic debates, attracting several states and even non-state actors to explore its dimensions.² Ohnesorge highlights that the idea of soft power is not only popular in the academic world but also the practical politics.³ Similarly, Commuri shares that the concept of soft power “allows theorists and practitioners to think about power in more complex and dynamic ways.”⁴ The contextual dynamicity of soft power has attracted many scholars to comprehend and explore this idea in a different context such as non-western, Asian, South Asian, Chinese, and Muslim. Nye identifies four main contextual changes that signify the soft power in contemporary international relations:

- i. the reduced importance of traditional resources of power such as geography, raw material, military force, and population⁵ due to economic interdependence, nationalism

1 Joseph S. Nye, "Responding to My Critics and Concluding Thoughts," in *Soft Power and US Foreign Policy: Theoretical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Inderjeet Parmar and Michael Cox (Canada: Routledge, 2010), 226.

2 Janice Bially Mattern, 'Why `Soft Power` Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics', *Millennium* 33, no. 3 (1 June 2005): 554, doi:10.1177/03058298050330031601

3 Hendrik W. Ohnesorge, *Soft Power: The Forces of Attraction in International Relations* (Springer Nature, 2019), 10.

4 Gitika Commuri, "Are You Pondering What I Am Pondering?" Understanding the Conditions Under Which States Gain and Lose Soft Power', in *Power in the 21st Century: International Security and International Political Economy in a Changing World*, Global Power Shift, ed., Enrico Fels, Jan-Frederik Kremer, and Katharina Kronenberg (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 43, doi:10.1007/978-3-642-25082-8_3

5 Joseph S. Nye, "The Changing Nature of World Power," *Political Science Quarterly* 105, no. 2 (1990): 179, doi:10.2307/2151022

- in weak states, the spread of technology⁶, rise of automation⁷ and the declining utility of military force.⁸
- ii. issues such as natural disasters, pandemics and cyber terrorism have transformed the nature and scale of threats to national security. These problems are beyond the limits of “the boundaries of nation-states and their traditional spheres of influence.”⁹
 - iii. transitioning of power from the western to non-western countries such as China, India, Brazil and Japan have changed the global political context.¹⁰ Soft power has the potential to facilitate this transition process and to avoid the Thucydides trap.
 - iv. the emergence of non-state actors “as heroes and baddies in international politics”¹¹ has challenged the monopolies of states over the power.¹² The states require soft power to deal with this diffusion of power.

“Soft Power Theory” explains the complex political issues such as the power of “non-violent and non-coercive ways of influencing others” to achieve the objectives of foreign

-
- 6 Joseph S. Nye Jr, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 182.
 - 7 Robert Winder, *Soft Power: The New Great Game* (UK: Little, Brown Book Group, 2020), 7, https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/Soft_Power.html?id=P9BnDwAAQBAJ&source=kp_book_description&redir_esc=y
 - 8 Ali S. Wyne, ‘Public Opinion and Power’, in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), 43, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203891520>
 - 9 Joseph S. Nye, *The Future of Power* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), 231.
 - 10 Joseph S. Nye and Jack Landman Goldsmith, "The Future of Power," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 64, no. 3 (2011): 46, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41149419>
 - 11 Khalid Saifullah and Dr Azhar Ahmad, "The Increasing Influence of the Non-State Actors in International Politics," *Journal of European Studies (JES)* 36, no. 2 (July 15, 2020): 39, <https://ojs.asce-uok.edu.pk/index.php/JES/article/view/144>
 - 12 Nye, *The Future of Power*.

policy.¹³ Soft power is especially important for small states that have limited military and economic resources. It is cost-effective as compared to hard power i.e., military and economic powers.¹⁴ Nye calculated that soft power, in the context of United States, remained 400 times inexpensive than hard power.¹⁵ This leads to a hypothesis that the countries with limited hard power resources can achieve the objectives of their foreign policies by investing in their soft power. However, it is important to identify, strengthen and utilise the soft power resources effectively.

Pakistan is amongst the developing countries that have diverse soft power resources. In the 2021 Global Soft Power Index, Pakistan is placed at 63rd position which is better than Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Uzbekistan, but lower than Iran.¹⁶ This rank indicates the need for research to explore Pakistan's soft power resources so that those can be mobilised to achieve a better position on the Index and the objectives of its foreign policy. This study tries to explore the cultural resources of Pakistan's soft power. It endeavours to answer the question that what is the potential of Pakistan's cultural capital in achieving the objectives of foreign policy? While following qualitative and descriptive research design, it argues that Pakistan can achieve its foreign policy objectives at bilateral, regional, and global levels through effective utilisation of the cultural resources of soft power. The study utilises document analysis as a research methodology which helps the readers to make empirical observations by using the written and/or non-written records.¹⁷

13 Simona Vasilevskyté, "Discussing Soft Power Theory After Nye: The Case of Geun Lee's Theoretical Approach," *Regioninės Studijos* no. 7 (2013): 146, <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=224621>

14 Joseph S. Nye Jr, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), x.

15 Nye Jr, *Soft Power*, xiii.

16 Brand Finance, 'Global Soft Power Index 2021', Research study on perceptions of nation brands (London, UK), 116–17, accessed March 9, 2021, <https://brandirectory.com/globalsoftpower/>

17 The records consulted for this research include audio and video material, reports, manuscripts, statistics and other documents. Primary data used in

Understanding Soft Power

Keohane and Nye share that soft power is an “ability to achieve desired outcomes through attraction rather than coercion.” They further explain the word ‘attraction’ as “others want what you want.”¹⁸ Defining soft power in absolute terms is very difficult as the words ‘soft’, and ‘power’ are very subjective and the combination of two subjective words in single terms adds to this complexity. The concept of soft power is contextual, relative and relies heavily on the respective target.¹⁹ Mattern highlights this subjectivity in soft power by stating that “what exactly is it that makes an idea attractive or appealing.”²⁰ This article thus avoids the immensity of these debates and follows the definition of Joseph Nye who has coined this term during the 1990s and is considered as a chief propagator of this concept. Nye defines soft power as an “ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction to obtain preferred outcomes.”²¹ This ability of a state rests on soft power resources, utilisation strategies, capacities of the relevant actors and the perceptions of the target country. Soft power can also be regarded as an analytical tool. It is a concept that fills the gap in the thought process about the concept of power and that it is integrated into political resonance, but it has mainly a practical utility.²²

this paper is taken from the reports prepared by the Government of Pakistan, International Intergovernmental Organisations, and Non-Governmental Organisations. Secondary data include published research papers in well-reputed journals, books, newspapers and magazines.

- 18 Robert Owen Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2012), 216.
- 19 Jean-Marc F. Blanchard and Fujia Lu, "Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power," *Asian Perspective* 36, no. 4 (2012): 571, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42704806>
- 20 Mattern, 'Why 'Soft Power' Isn't So Soft', 548.
- 21 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 20–21.
- 22 Muhammad Nadeem Mirza, Hussain Abbas, and Muhammad Qasim Nizamani, "Evaluating China's Soft Power Discourse: Assumptions,

How Soft Power Works?

Nye proposes that the availability of soft power resources is a prerequisite to exercise soft power. A 'skilful conversion strategy' and 'critical ability' are required to utilise these resources to achieve the outcomes.²³ Nye suggests a conversion process of soft power resources into the outcomes (see. Figure 1). The process starts with the availability of soft power resources such as culture, political values and foreign policy. A country that owns soft power resources requires policy tools and conversion skills to utilise those resources. As a result of the utilisation of resources by the aspirant country, the target country responds positively or negatively. A positive response reflects the accomplishment of the objectives of foreign policy while a negative response indicates the failure of soft power strategies. A positive response that leads to some decisions and actions by the target government is named as the outcomes.



Figure 1: Conversion of Soft Power Resources to Behaviour (Outcomes)²⁴

This study confines to the first element of the conversion framework i.e., soft power resources and concentrates on the cultural resources of soft power. The authors explain

Strategies, and Objectives," *Global Strategic and Security Studies Review* 5, no. 4 (December 2020): 40–50, doi:10.31703/gsssr.2020(V-IV).05

23 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 100.

24 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 100.

Pakistan's cultural resources to highlight the potential of its soft power.

Defining Soft Power Resources

Nye defines power resources as “tangible and intangible raw material or vehicles that underlies the power relationships.”²⁵ Nye identifies three basic soft power resources: culture, political values and foreign policy.²⁶ This trio of soft power resources “is widely accepted and shared by most researchers.”²⁷ These soft power resources are less tangible in contrast to hard power resources.²⁸ In addition to these three basic soft power resources, Nye identifies two secondary resources i.e., economic resources and military resources, that produce both soft and hard powers depending upon the context.²⁹ It is sometimes difficult to measure how much a secondary resource contributes to producing hard power or soft power. This depends on many factors including the context and the perceptions of the target.³⁰ Nye cites many examples where economic and military resources contributed to producing the soft power of implementing countries. These include the Beijing Consensus, efforts by Turkey to join the European Union, military to military cooperation, military training programs and use of the military for disaster relief.³¹

25 Joseph S. Nye, ‘Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept’, *Journal of Political Power* (10 February 2021): 3, doi:10.1080/2158379X.2021.1879572

26 Nye, ‘Soft Power,’ 84.

27 Blanchard and Lu, “Thinking Hard About Soft Power,” 569.

28 Su Changhe, ‘Soft Power’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, ed., Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 33, file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/The%20Oxford%20Handbook%20of%20Modern%20Diplomacy%20by%20Andrew%20F.%20Cooper,%20Jorge%20Heine,%20Ramesh%20Thakur%20(z-lib.org).pdf

29 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 85.

30 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 85, 85-86.

31 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 85.

Unfolding the Culture

The first basic resource 'culture' is defined as a "set of values and practices that create meaning for a society and has many manifestations."³² Nye identifies three different aspects of culture; universal also known as popular culture, national also known as traditional culture and local culture consisting of "networks of status, caste, religions and communities."³³ Many other scholars also believe that culture is an important source of soft power.³⁴ Nye shares that the culture produces soft power in two ways:

- i. direct - sometimes it directly attracts the target and achieves the outcomes,
- ii. indirect - in some other cases it requires mediators to facilitate the process of attracting the target.³⁵

The media and entertainment industry including television shows, dramas, radio programmes, films hold sufficient cultural capital to materialise the soft power. Rosenberg shares that America used Hollywood as a strategy to reduce the image loss of the country during World War I.³⁶ Turkey, China, Korea, Iran and many other countries have started using films, dramas and music not only to promote the soft image of the countries but also to earn sufficient revenue to support the national economies. Religion and religious institutions are another main component of culture. Religious authorities have legitimised the political influence of states in some cases and helped to maintain and enhance the

32 Nye Jr, *Soft Power*, 11.

33 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 87-88.

34 Kostas Ifantis, "Soft Power", in *Routledge Handbook of Diplomacy and Statecraft*, ed. McKercher B. J. C. (USA and Canada: Routledge Handbooks Online, 2011), 442, doi:10.4324/9780203807804

35 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 85.

36 Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 79, <https://www.amazon.com/Spreading-American-Dream-Expansion-1890-1945/dp/0809001462>

landscape. Ooi shares that tourism has become crucial in the modern age as academicians and policymakers are more concerned to learn and manage the image and perceptions of their countries. This not only contributes to achieving geopolitical interests but also mobilise international business.⁴⁵ Food is also an important factor in culture. Reynolds identifies a direct relationship between soft power and food.⁴⁶ Nye cites examples of American food such as McDonald's and Coca Cola while explaining the concept of soft power.⁴⁷

Nye shares many examples where languages as part of the culture produce soft power. He cites the Confucius Institutes established by the Chinese Government to promote the Chinese language all across the globe.⁴⁸ He further shares the example of the spread of the French language contributing to enhancing French soft power in Europe.⁴⁹ The promotion of the Japanese language in Hong Kong has supported the Japanese Government to capitalise the soft power beyond the scope of economic interests.⁵⁰ Winder shares that people are also a key aspect of soft power. He forecasts in the context of Africa that a rising population with youth in the majority will "release a torrent of new energy and new demand on the world."⁵¹ He further shares that this

45 Ooi, 'Soft Power', 878.

46 Christian Reynolds, "The Soft Power of Food: A Diplomacy of Hamburgers and Sushi?", *Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary, Journal, Common Ground Publishing LLC* 1, no. 2 (2012): 49, <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2603315>

47 Joseph S. Nye Jr, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 72.

48 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 88.

49 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 2011, 88..

50 Kazuyuki Nomura and Takako Mochizuki, "Japanese Language in the Wake of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement: Is It a Form of Soft Power?", in *Japanese Language and Soft Power in Asia*, ed., Kayoko Hashimoto (Singapore: Springer, 2018), 174, [doi:10.1007/978-981-10-5086-2_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5086-2_9)

51 Winder, *Soft Power*, 272.

rising young and educated population will contribute to strengthening the African economy.⁵²

Pakistan's Cultural Resources

Religion, history, media and entertainment, tourism, language, people and sports are important cultural resources of Pakistan. Most of these cultural resources are underutilised and require attention from the relevant actors to actualise their full potential. The detail of each cultural resource is explained below.

Religion

The Constitution of Pakistan 1973 makes Islam "the state religion" of the country.⁵³ This not only connects the country with other Islamic countries but also attracts them towards Pakistan.⁵⁴ The country is a founding member of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and enjoys a preferential status as its founding member.⁵⁵ Pakistan is the only Muslim nuclear power and has one of the strongest Muslim armies in the OIC. The country has used this privileged status in the OIC as a soft power resource and obtained categorical support on the issue of Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK)⁵⁶ and mobilised development assistance from Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development established by the OIC.⁵⁷ Although there are many questions on the

52 Winder, *Soft Power*, 273.

53 'The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan', Pub. L. No. As modified upto the 31st May, 2018], 214 (2018), 3, http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415_632.pdf

54 Shuja Nawaz, *The Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighbourhood* (Karachi, Pakistan: Liberty Publishing, 2020), 67, https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/The_Battle_for_Pakistan.html?id=Gk_VDwAAQBAJ&source=kp_book_description&redir_esc=y

55 S. S. Pirzada, "Pakistan and the OIC," *Pakistan Horizon* 40, no. 2 (1987): 14, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41394243>

56 Organization of Islamic Cooperation, 'Press Releases by OIC on the Issue of Indian Occupied Kashmir', *Organization of Islamic Cooperation*, accessed March 17, 2021, https://www.oic-oci.org/search/?x_key=Kashmir&x_do=1&lan=en&x_where=news

57 Dr. Bandar Bin Mohamed Hamza Hajjar, 'Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, Ninth Annual Report 2016', Annual Report (Islamic Solidarity

effectiveness of the OIC as a platform of the Muslim countries in resolving the issues of Muslims, however, Pakistan's soft power within the structure of the OIC is visible.

Pakistan has also emerged as a key player in the recently developed "Islamic Military Alliance (IMA)".⁵⁸ Pakistan's Army has extended its military training programme to most of the Arab and African countries making efforts to cultivate soft power.⁵⁹ These relationships provide Pakistan both with the opportunities and challenges required to develop and utilise its soft power effectively.

Two out of four neighbours of Pakistan are Muslim countries while India ranks second in the world with the largest Muslim population.⁶⁰ This provides Pakistan with an opportunity to utilise its Muslim identity to achieve the objectives of its foreign policy. Pakistan can also strengthen its strategic relationships with other Muslim countries including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, export manpower to Arab countries, enhance economic cooperation with other Muslim countries and minimise its diplomatic isolation. Muslim identity of Pakistan serves as a soft power resource for the country in the broader scope of its foreign policy.

History

Pakistan is a home of ancient civilisations including Indus Valley⁶¹ and Gandhara⁶² where cities such as Harappa and

Fund for Development, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, 2016), 53, https://isfd.isdb.org/EN/publications/Documents/Annual%20Reports/ISFD%20Annual%20Report%202017_English.pdf

58 Ghulam Qumber, Waseem Ishaque, and Saqib Riaz, "Islamic Military Alliance (IMA) - and Pakistan," *Global Regional Review* 2, no. 1 (2017): 135, <https://ideas.repec.org/a/aaw/grrjr/v2y2017i1p135-151.html>

59 'Pakistan Army - Foreign Training', accessed March 18, 2021, <https://www.pakistanarmy.gov.pk/Foreign-Training.php>

60 The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050 (Washington/D.C: Pew Research Center, 2015), 74, http://www.pewforum.org/files/2015/03/PF_15.04.02_ProjectionsFullReport.pdf.

61 Jane McIntosh, *The Ancient Indus Valley: New Perspectives* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 9,

Mohenjo-Daro were being run democratically by the guilds.⁶³ This enables Pakistan to attract foreign tourists, scholars, historians, archaeologists and civil societies to learn about the rich culture and history of the country. Pakistan shares these civilisations and history with its neighbours including Iran, Afghanistan and India. Existing literature cites many examples where countries with shared history have developed beneficial relationships.⁶⁴ Pakistan has huge potential to mobilise the soft power in the region based on the resources of shared history and civilisations.

Archaeological and natural sites attract foreign tourists and serve as a venue to generate soft power.⁶⁵ When foreign tourists visit a country, they learn about the local culture, history, politics and people. Pakistan has only six cultural sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List while 26 more sites are in the process of approval.⁶⁶ This number is very less as compared to Iran where 24 cultural and natural sites are on the World Heritage List and 57 more sites are in the

https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=1AJO2A-CbccC&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&dq=The+Ancient+Indus+Valley+New+Perspectives&ots=jdhWxvff00&sig=S0-LeeSrg3pM8OrzsCcvB8AwtVM&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=The%20Ancient%20Indus%20Valley%20New%20Perspectives&f=false

- 62 Rafi U. Samad, *The Grandeur of Gandhara: The Ancient Buddhist Civilization of the Swat, Peshawar, Kabul and Indus Valleys* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2011), 5, [file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/The%20Grandeur%20of%20Gandhara%20the%20Ancient%20Buddhist%20Civilization%20of%20the%20Swat,%20Peshawar,%20Kabul%20and%20Indus%20Valleys.%20by%20Rafi%20U%20Samad%20Rafi-us%20Samad%20\(z-lib.org\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/The%20Grandeur%20of%20Gandhara%20the%20Ancient%20Buddhist%20Civilization%20of%20the%20Swat,%20Peshawar,%20Kabul%20and%20Indus%20Valleys.%20by%20Rafi%20U%20Samad%20Rafi-us%20Samad%20(z-lib.org).pdf)
- 63 Khalid Saifullah, *Gramsci, Hegemony and Civil Society in Pakistan* (Islamabad, Pakistan: Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue, 2018), 33.
- 64 Sadeghi and Hajimineh, "The Role of Iran's Soft Power in Confronting Iranophobia," 220.
- 65 Mostaque and Sultana, 'Exploring Soft Power Potential of Bangladesh: Resources, Limitation, and Options,' xiii.
- 66 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 'UNESCO World Heritage List, Pakistan', *UNESCO World Heritage Centre*, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/pk>

process of approval.⁶⁷ While India has 38 sites on the list with 42 in process.⁶⁸ The Government of Pakistan is making efforts to include more historical sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List, however, this still requires strong coordination among media, academia, government and tourism corporations.

Media and Entertainment

Pakistan has huge potential to develop an international film and drama industry. Pakistanis produced “best poetry, plays and fiction.”⁶⁹ Pakistani dramas are popular in Arab countries⁷⁰ and India.⁷¹ There are many countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the Central Asian States that share their cultures and religious values with Pakistan. This provides Pakistan with an opportunity to produce films and dramas for these countries to mobilise soft power. Former Pakistani diplomat, Maliha Lodhi shares an example where she utilised the different tools of cultural diplomacy and achieved a diplomatic goal. She arranged a concert, a food event, an Eid festival and exhibited Pakistan’s role in UN peacekeeping missions.⁷² Many of the Pakistanis have earned a great worldwide repute in the media and entertainment industry. These include Shermeen Obaid

67 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ‘UNESCO World Heritage List, Iran’, *UNESCO World Heritage Centre*, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/ir>

68 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ‘UNESCO World Heritage List, India’, *UNESCO World Heritage Centre*, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/in>

69 Nawaz, *The Battle for Pakistan*, xxxii.

70 ‘ Bilal Abbas, Famous Drama Cheekh, aired on MBC Arabia in Ramadan 2020 - ‘Entertainment Zone’, April 22, 2020, <https://www.entertainmentzone.me/bilal-abbas-famous-drama-cheekh-air-on-mbc-arabia-in-ramadan-2020/>

71 S. Shantharaju and N. A. Kumar, "A Perspective Study on Fame of Pakistani Tele-Serials in India," *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 21, no. 9 (2016): 8, doi:10.9790/0837-2109090813

72 Maleeha Lodhi, "Why Soft Power Is Pivotal," *Dawn*, April 6, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1546838>

Chinoy⁷³, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan⁷⁴ and Abida Parveen.⁷⁵ Facilitating these and many other actors and organisations will help strengthen Pakistan's entertainment industry to earn revenues and produce soft power.

Tourism

Tourism is important for the countries like Pakistan that are facing serious challenges in terms of perceptions and economy. The country has a huge potential for international tourism.⁷⁶ Pakistan is blessed with rich culture, beautiful landscape, tasty food, friendly people, art, history, literature and music. The country is ranked as "the best holiday destination during 2020"⁷⁷ and is declared as "one of the friendliest countries on earth with mountain scenery that beyond anyone's wildest imagination."⁷⁸ American business

-
- 73 Huma Qureshi, 'Pakistan's First Oscar-Winner Should Be Celebrated for Exposing the "bad Bits"', *The Guardian*, March 1, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/mar/01/pakistan-oscar-winner-sharmeen-obaid-chinoy>.
- 74 'BBC Asian Network - Nusrat: 20 Years On, Nusrat Through the Night! - Jeff Buckley, The Grammys & UNESCO! 11 Little Known Facts about Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan', *BBC*, accessed March 19, 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1K5hTFbDcMYRJ839LM2wnK3/jeff-buckley-the-grammys-unesco-11-little-known-facts-about-nusrat-fateh-ali-khan>
- 75 Peter Culshaw, "Singer with the Knock-out Effect," *The Telegraph*, accessed March 19, 2021, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/4725607/Singer-with-the-knock-out-effect.html>
- 76 Samina Khalil *et al.*, "Role of Tourism in Economic Growth: Empirical Evidence from Pakistan & Economy [with Comments]," *The Pakistan Development Review* 46, no. 4 (2007): 986, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41261208>
- 77 'Pakistan Ranked "The Best Holiday Destination" For 2020 By Leading Travel Magazine', *Latest Asian, Middle-East, EurAsian, Indian News*, December 14, 2019, <https://eurasianimes.com/pakistan-ranked-the-best-holiday-destination-for-2020-by-leading-travel-magazine/>
- 78 Government of Pakistan, 'The British Backpacker Society Has Identified #Pakistan as It's Top Travel Destination Due to It Being "One of the Friendliest Countries on Earth, with Mountain Scenery That Is beyond Anyone's Wildest Imagination". #BeautifulPakistan #TravelPakistan <https://t.co/D44Lqet9cK>', Tweet, @GovtofPakistan, (2 January 2018), <https://twitter.com/GovtofPakistan/status/948108162154008576>

magazine 'Forbes' includes Pakistan among "the ten coolest places to go in 2019."⁷⁹ Despite this huge potential and workable opportunities, Pakistan ranks in 121 positions amongst 140 countries on the global index for travel and tourism for 2019. The country is even on lower ratings than Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Iran and Sri Lanka.⁸⁰ The global index further advises to improve safety and security situation, ensure the availability of trained human resource, enhance the quality of communication technologies, integrate environmental sustainability into tourism and increase international openness.⁸¹ Pakistan is taking some measures to comply with the suggestions of this document. Ministry of Interior, Pakistan has introduced online tourist visa services for 191 countries and on-arrival tourist visa services for 50 countries.⁸² However, there is still a lot to do in this context.

Language

Pakistan is a linguistically rich country with 74 international, regional and local languages.⁸³ This lingual diversity provides Pakistan with an opportunity to capitalise on its soft power at the regional and global levels. Pakistan's national language 'Urdu' is spoken by around 600 million people as their first or second language around the world and is

79 Ann Abel, 'The 10 Coolest Places to Go in 2019', American Business Magazine, *Forbes*, accessed March 20, 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/annabel/2018/12/12/the-10-coolest-places-to-go-in-2019/>

80 Lauren Uppink Calderwood and Maksim Soshkin, *Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019* (Geneva Switzerland: World Economic Forum, 2019), xiii, <https://wef.ch/2bqJcky>

81 Calderwood and Soshkin, *Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019*, 29.

82 'List of Countries for Visa in Your Inbox (Tourist)', Ministry of Interior, Government of Pakistan, *Ministry of Interior, Pakistan Online Visa System*, (March 20, 2021), <https://visa.nadra.gov.pk/tourist-friendly-countries/tfc/>

83 Fauzia Shamim and Uzma Rashid, "The English/Urdu-Medium Divide in Pakistan: Consequences for Learner Identity and Future Life Chances," *Journal of Education and Educational Development* 6, no. 1 (June 2019): 44, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1216773>

included in the group of five most spoken languages.⁸⁴ Around 44 million people in India are Urdu speakers.⁸⁵ Urdu is endorsed as an official language in many of the Indian states especially Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.⁸⁶ There are thousands of people in other countries such as Bangladesh⁸⁷, Nepal⁸⁸, Sri Lanka⁸⁹, Afghanistan⁹⁰, Mauritius, Fiji, South Africa⁹¹ who speak Urdu. The 'complex morphology' of Urdu also makes this language more attractive to foreigners especially the Muslims as it "inherits grammatical forms and vocabulary from Arabic, Persian, and native languages of South Asia."⁹² This enables Pakistan to produce art, literature and other cultural products in Urdu to export to the countries that share this language. Pakistan

-
- 84 Tej K. Bhatia and Ashok Koul, *Colloquial Urdu: The Complete Course for Beginners* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 1, https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=PvqEAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA1&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
- 85 Ruth Laila Schmidt, *Urdu: An Essential Grammar* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), xvi, https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=tAiiT5ZR_XkC&pg=PR23&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
- 86 M. Z. M. Nomani, Ghazal Salahuddin, and Madiha Tahreem, "Legal Policy for the Protection of Urdu Language in India," *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology* 17, no. 7 (2 November 2020): 5075, <https://www.archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/2627>
- 87 Victoria Redclift, *Statelessness and Citizenship: Camps and the Creation of Political Space* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 67, https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=BVxtNBjTaCgC&oi=fnd&pg=PP2&dq=Statelessness+and+Citizenship:+Camps+and+the+Creation+of+Political+Space&ots=RniNAFw5WO&sig=rHJn3FE2FDjZxwbmCiR178ndvU&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=urdu&f=false
- 88 'UNPO: Madhesh - Urdu in Nepal', accessed March 23, 2021, <https://unpo.org/members/20426>
- 89 M. M. M. Mahroof, "Urdu in Sri Lanka: Socio-Linguistics of a Minority Language," *Islamic Studies* 31, no. 2 (1992): 185, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20840072>
- 90 Schmidt, *Urdu*, xvi.
- 91 Schmidt, *Urdu*, xvi, 1.
- 92 Muhammad Humayoun *et al.*, "Urdu Summary Corpus", in *Proceedings of the Tenth International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC'16)* (LREC 2016, Portorož, Slovenia: European Language Resources Association (ELRA), 2016), 796, <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/L16-1128>

has established a 'National Language Promotion Department' that focuses on the promotion and adaption of Urdu at the national level.⁹³ There is a need to establish new organisations and enhance the scope of existing forums to reach out to the millions of Urdu speaking communities all across the globe.

The English language is considered the "second language of Pakistan."⁹⁴ Inherited from colonial rule, English is usually used for legal and judicial communication. Local people prefer to send their children to the English medium schools. Traffic signs, shops names, business addresses and websites are developed in the English language. This makes it easy for a foreign traveller from English speaking country to visit Pakistan.⁹⁵ Comfort in the English language provides an opportunity to people in Pakistan to make commercial, educational, economic and recreational transactions with different countries. Pakistan secures the fourth position in international freelancing contributing to the country's economy by USD 0.5 billion (2017).⁹⁶ Youth specialised in diverse technical skills are earning great respect for the country through freelancing. In terms of soft power, Pakistan still needs to make serious efforts to utilise its expertise in the English language to develop its soft image.

The Persian language provides an opening to Pakistan to strengthen its relationships with Iran. There are communities

93 'National Language Promotion Department: Objectives', accessed March 23, 2021, <http://nlpd.gov.pk/en/objective.php>

94 Furrakh Abbas, Dr Azhar Pervaiz, and Faheem Arshad, "The Competing Status of Urdu and English after Declaration of Urdu as Official Language in Pakistan," *Journal of Research (Urdu)* 34, no. 1 (31 December 2018): 145, <https://jorurdu.bzu.edu.pk/website/journal/article/5d1a343ff0b51/page>

95 Tariq Rahman, "English in Pakistan: Past, Present and Future," in *Functional Variations in English: Theoretical Considerations and Practical Challenges*, ed. Ram Ashish Giri, Anamika Sharma, and James D'Angelo, 1st ed., vol. 37, Multilingual Education (Switzerland AG: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 127, doi:10.1007/978-3-030-52225-4

96 Sobia Shabbir, 'Pakistan 4th Most Popular Country for Freelancing | E-Rozgaar', accessed March 23, 2021, <https://erozgaar.pitb.gov.pk/Pakistan-4th-freelancing-country>

in the western and northern areas of Pakistan that speak Persian.⁹⁷ Like Arabic, Persian is also considered “as the cultural language of the Muslims.”⁹⁸ This attracted Allama Muhammad Iqbal to learn and write in Persian. Iqbal’s term of ‘Khudi’ i.e., ‘self’ is also a Persian word. Allama Iqbal is known as ‘Iqbal Lahouri’ and considered the great Persian poet in Iran.⁹⁹ As a national poet, Allama Iqbal is recognised and celebrated in Pakistan. The government and civil society in Pakistan require to explore the potential areas of collaboration with Persian communities based on the teaching of Iqbal and shared Islamic values.

People of Pakistan

Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world¹⁰⁰ with 64 percent of the population is less than 30 years old.¹⁰¹ Pakistani people are considered as “resilient, hardworking, adventurous, honest and enterprising.”¹⁰² Nawaz categorises the Pakistani population as politically aware, business-minded and keen to educate their girls. He further adds that Pakistan holds a “critical mass of urban and educated women and men”¹⁰³, that holds the “key to its change and

97 Brian Spooner, "Persian, Farsi, Dari, Tajiki: Language Names and Language Policies," in *Language Policy and Language Conflict in Afghanistan and Its Neighbors*, ed. Harold Schiffman, vol. 2 (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 89, https://brill.com/view/book/edcoll/9789004217652/B9789004217652_005.xml

98 Saleem Kidwani, "Iqbal—Philosophic Poet," *Sahitya Akademi* 18, no. 3 (1975): 78, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23330820>

99 Alireza Mahmoudi and Fatemeh Bagheri, "Innovative Metonymy in the poems of Allama Iqbal Lahouri," *Journal of Subcontinent Researches* 11, no. 37 (23 September 2019): 171, doi:10.22111/jsr.2019.4870

100 'United States Census Bureau, Population Clock: World', Government Website, accessed March 20, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/popclock/world>

101 Shakeel Ahmad, 'Unleashing the Potential of a Young Pakistan | Human Development Reports', UNDP Website, *United Nations Development Programme Human Development Reports*, accessed March 20, 2021, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/unleashing-potential-young-pakistan>

102 Nawaz, *The Battle for Pakistan*, xxxii.

103 Nawaz, *The Battle for Pakistan*, xxxiv.

development.”¹⁰⁴ Lodhi shares that flood disasters in Pakistan highlighted that the country has a “weak state and a strong society.”¹⁰⁵ Pakistan has “an able pool of professional and technically trained people, a hardworking labour force, a growing middle class, an enterprising business community and lively arts, literature and music scene.”¹⁰⁶ Pakistan thus has all the constituents to capitalise on the soft power: people, ideas, strategic location and untapped resources.¹⁰⁷

The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development aims at managing the human resource in the country.¹⁰⁸ The Ministry’s activities in human resource development mainly revolves around the welfare of labourers,¹⁰⁹ but it does not have a concrete plan to develop the human resource to meet the contemporary challenges of the global economy and international politics. The “Minister’s Youth Initiatives”¹¹⁰ programme has also a narrow scope and does not meet the needs of modern society. This is validated by the Human Development Report 2020 where Pakistan ranks at 154th position out of 189 countries.¹¹¹ Pakistan requires to follow the latest, modern and innovative approaches to prepare its people to compete with other nations at regional and global levels.

104 Nawaz, *The Battle for Pakistan*, 350.

105 Maleeha Lodhi, ‘Introduction,’ in *Pakistan: Beyond the Crisis State*, ed. Maleeha Lodhi (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1, <https://oup.com.pk/best-sellers/pakistan-beyond-the-crisis-state.html>

106 Lodhi, ‘Introduction,’ 2.

107 Nawaz, *The Battle for Pakistan*, 350.

108 ‘Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development’, accessed March 21, 2021, <http://ophrd.gov.pk/>

109 ‘Year Book, 2017-18, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development’ (Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Government of Pakistan), 30, accessed March 21, 2021, <http://ophrd.gov.pk/SiteImage/Misc/files/Year-Book-2017-18.pdf>

110 ‘Youth Initiatives, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives’, 5, accessed March 21, 2021, https://www.pc.gov.pk/uploads/youth/Youth_Initiatives.pdf

111 Pedro Conceição, ‘Human Development Report 2020’ (USA: UNDP), 243, accessed March 21, 2021, <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf>

Sports

Cricket is considered as one of the powerful sports in South Asia that has the potential to bring opposing parties to a table to communicate and to bring peace.¹¹² It is popular in almost all the countries in South Asia including Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.¹¹³ Khondker shares that cricket in Bangladesh has contributed towards nation-building.¹¹⁴ Thussu shares that cricket has played a significant role in restoring the bilateral diplomatic dialogues between Pakistan and India in 2011.¹¹⁵ Over the years, the introduction of new techniques and formats in cricket has made this game more glamorous, popular and monetised. The 20 overs format of cricket match along with the inception of the Indian Premier League, Pakistan Super League, Lanka Premier League and Shpageeza Cricket League has added more entertainment, commercialisation and regionalisation to this game. Countries make efforts to invite players from the neighbouring countries. For example, in Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2021, players from South Africa, West Indies, Afghanistan, England and Australia participated. Pakistan gets an opportunity to disseminate the messages through television screens to different countries.

People in Pakistan also love other sports especially hockey, squash, polo¹¹⁶ and kabaddi.¹¹⁷ Pakistan has hosted

112 Saad Shafqat and Nadir Bharucha, "Is Cricket the Magic Glue That Unites South Asia?", *BMJ Open* 328, no. 7443 (1 January 2004): 843, https://ecommons.aku.edu/pakistan_fhs_mc_med_neurol/94/

113 Ronojoy Sen, 'Introductoini: The Landscape of Sport in South Asia', *India International Centre Quarterly* 44, no. 3/4 (2017): 3, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45129781>

114 Habibul Haque Khondher, "Cricket in Bangladesh," *India International Centre Quarterly* 44, no. 3/4 (2017): 31, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45129783>

115 Daya Kishan Thussu, *Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood, 2013th edition* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 164, <https://www.amazon.com/Communicating-Indias-Soft-Power-Bollywood/dp/1137027886>

116 Ali Hasaan, "Establishing Athlete Brand in Cricket: Fan's Perception about Foreign Cricketers in Pakistan Super League (PSL)," *Pamukkale Journal of*

international sports including Cricket in 1987 and 1996, hockey in 1990,¹¹⁸ volleyball in 2005,¹¹⁹ wrestling in 2018,¹²⁰ squash in 2016,¹²¹ football in 2005,¹²² and kabaddi in 2020.¹²³ This validates the efforts of the government to promote international sports in the country. Pakistan launched the PSL in 2015. Every year, afterwards, it kept on growing in terms of revenues and the amount of entertainment.¹²⁴

Export of sports items is another dimension of developing the soft image of Pakistan. The United States imports 71 percent of its soccer balls from Pakistan.¹²⁵ Despite facing many challenges related to the security situation, poor

Sport Sciences 7, no. 3 (12 September 2016): 25, <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/psbd/261726>

- 117 Alam Zeb Safi, 'Super Kabaddi League to Have Players from around the World', accessed March 27, 2021, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/271775-super-kabaddi-league-to-have-players-from-around-the-world>
- 118 Muhammad Ashar Asdullah, Rana Navid Ahmad, and Zahida Parveen, "Development and Challenges of Sports Tourism in Pakistan," *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports* 9, no. 0 (2015): 24, <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JTHS/article/view/23334>
- 119 'All the Previous Results For AVC Club Championships - Asian Volleyball Confederation', September 25, 2008, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080925053615/http://www.asianvolleyball.org/previous%20results/2008-04-14/177777.html>
- 120 "Islamabad, Karachi to Host 2nd Edition of Professional Wrestling next Month," *Pakistan Today*, accessed March 27, 2021, <https://archive.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/07/05/islamabad-karachi-to-host-2nd-edition-of-professional-wrestling-next-month/>
- 121 'Bahria Town Squash International 2016 Islamabad', accessed March 27, 2021, <http://www.squashsite.co.uk/2009/bahria2016.htm>
- 122 'SAFF Gold Cup 2005 | South Asian Football Federation', accessed March 27, 2021, <https://saffederation.org/saff-gold-cup-2005/>
- 123 Mohammad Yaqoob, 'Pakistan Face India in Kabaddi Final', *Dawn*, February 16, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1534701>
- 124 Rehan Aftab and Muhammad Naveed, "Investment Review in Sports Leagues: Financial Evidence from Pakistan Super League," *Managerial Finance* ahead-of-print, no. ahead-of-print (1 January 2020): 2, doi:10.1108/MF-04-2020-0214
- 125 Karin Astrid Siegmann, "Soccer Ball Production for Nike in Pakistan," *Economic and Political Weekly* 43, no. 22 (5 June 2015): 57, <https://www.epw.in/journal/2008/22/review-labour-review-issues-specials/soccer-ball-production-nike-pakistan.html>

governance, lack of relevant policies and institutions, insufficient funds and poor sports infrastructure, the country has contributed significantly in terms of utilising sports as a resource of soft power.

Conclusion

Culture is amongst the three primary resources of soft power. Western and non-western countries are utilising their cultural resources to accumulate soft power to achieve the objectives of their foreign policies. Non-western countries have contextualised Nye's framework of soft power and made efforts to utilise their cultural resources. Pakistan also has diverse cultural resources including its Muslim identity, history, media and entertainment industry, archaeological and natural sites, tourism, national and local languages, the 5th largest population and sports. Pakistan's identity as a Muslim country provides an avenue to develop friendly relationships with Muslim countries. The country owns hundreds of historical and natural sites that can be attractive to international scholars, historians, tourists and civil societies. The natural landscape of Pakistan ranging from the second highest mountain K-2 to five important deserts to about 990 kilometres long coastline provides a great opportunity to attract tourists from all across the world. Pakistani dramas are popular in Urdu speaking communities. Pakistani truck art is famous worldwide creating an opportunity not only to earn revenues but also a soft image for the country. Pakistan's youth bulge is another important cultural asset to mobilise soft power. Sports event especially the recently introduced commercial format of 'super leagues' in cricket, hockey and kabaddi attracts more viewers and mobilises revenues.

These fewer examples of cultural resources highlight the enormous potential of Pakistan's soft power. Poor governance, corruption, incompetence and weak institutions are some of the reasons that hinder Pakistan's progress in employing its cultural resources. The country requires effective policy tools and relevant skills to utilise this

potential. The study invites the researchers, scholars and academicians to further explore Pakistan's cultural resources.