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Soft Power Of India: A Journey From Traditional To Contemporary

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Abstract

This research article attempts to trace the soft power of India from its ancient times to contemporary times. In doing so, it tries to understand the changes which soft power of India has gone through over the period of time. This article also discusses the various steps which the current Indian government under the leadership of PM NarendraModi has taken to enhance its soft power.

Introduction

Since the coinage of the concept of Soft Power way back in 1990, by American scholar Joseph Nye it has travelled a great distance. Gradually it has crept into the foreign policy of nation states as well as in the speeches of various political leaders. Soft power is defined as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion". It can be summarized as the power of attraction which works on persuasion and influence. Its growing importance has seen the nation states taking great efforts to wield their soft power. In context to India, soft power can be found in-built into its history, geography (culture) as well as in foreign policy though the term itself was never used. The idolization of Mahatma Gandhi and his principle of Non-violence and Civil Disobedience Movement all over the world is one such example. However, in the contemporary world, India is increasing its use of soft power in a more strategic manner. Under the current leadership, India is promoting its soft power in a more systematic and coherent way in the form of bollywood movies, music, culture, linking diaspora as well as yoga. In this background, the author aims at understanding the emergence of India's soft power through the resources of soft power which India possess as well as through the strategies which India is now using to tap its soft power.

Soft Power: An Overview

The concept of 'power' is the highly debated topic in the arena of international relations. Different schools in International Relations (IR) hold different opinion about the concept. Traditionally, the concept has been defined in terms of military power and economic power to determine state capacities. However, of late, Joseph Nye in his book "Bound to Lead: The

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Changing Nature of American Power" separated the three dimensions of power as- coercion by using military threats, influence by offering economic incentives, and lastly the ability to co-opt other states (to which he calls as 'soft power' and is different from the rest two identified power which falls into 'hard power' concept).[1]

Since the coinage of the term Soft power, it has received a great attention as a concept from the international arena. Since then the concept has been largely accepted by the theorist as well as the political leaders and found its place in the foreign policy of different nation states. The term was first coined by Joseph Nye, in 1990 in book "Bound to Lead: Changing Nature of American Power". The concept was further expanded in his other series of publications namely in year 1990, 2002, 2004, 2007, and 2008. Nye, a Harvard political scientist defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion"[2]. This reflects that soft power emphasize on persuasion or influence to achieve the goals rather than resorting to force and coercion. He further details about the sources of soft power, where he identifies the three most important sources where the attractiveness of a nation-state lies that is- culture, political values and lastly foreign policy. However, in the present scenario, sources of soft power has expanded to include all those intangible forces which holds an attractive or influential power such as tourism, diaspora, theatres and movies, foreign students and so on. NicolosBlarel summarized soft power as "ability to modify other state's preferences because of their perception of you."[3] Though, the concept of soft power is often criticized as being slow in yielding results, but still being less effective it has been largely been accepted by nation-states as an alternative to achieve their foreign policy goals. However, it cannot be said that the success of a nation-state is alone depended on either soft power or on hard power. Rather Nye says that a success of nation-states depend on the combination of hard power and soft power, which he call as "smart power".

Sources of soft power

In the era of globalized world, perception matters a lot and every country of the world are involved in branding their image. Soft Power in this regard plays a very important role. In the

[1] As quoted in Nicolas Blarel, "India's Soft Power: From Potential to Reality?", *IDEAS Reports*, Special Reports, Nicholas Kitchen,(ed), SR010, LSE IDEAS, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, available on http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf

[2] Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

[3] Nicolas B. (n.d.). India's soft power: From potential to reality? Retrieved from *http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf*

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last few years, the increased use of soft power assets and yearly publication of Global Soft Power Index, reflects that there is a race and struggle among the various actors at the world platform to boost its soft power. This is largely because,it has emerged as one of the most potent tools to reach out to the international community at large. Facebook by US, Bollywood or Yoga by India, Technology by Japan and many more examples out there shows the effort each country is now taking to attract the world towards itself. Therefore, it becomes highly essential to understand the various sources of soft power.

Joseph Nye himself lays down the three sources of soft power, namely culture, political values and foreign policy. However, over the period of time, this sources of soft power has expanded to many more areas which act as a source of soft power. The different sources of soft power are-

1. Culture (traditional and contemporary)-A country culture be it in the form of traditions, music, films, arts and so on offers the attraction to an individual. Most of the thinkers of soft power has accepted culture as a powerful source of soft power.Such as Joseph Nye, Wang & Lu identifies culture as the major source of soft power. The only difference is that where Nye focuses on modern American culture while Wang &Lu, focuses exclusively on the traditional Chinese culture.However, in the end both of them accepts culture as one of th major components of soft power as it plays the great role in attracting the world community towards a nation-state.

2. Political values- Political values means those values which a nation-state holds on and tries to live up to them within their boundaries as well as outside their boundaries.These values help in shaping the societal values prevailing in the nation-states. Joseph Nye accepts the political values as an important source of soft power. Wang & Lu too identifies the political values under the heading of 'political ideals' as an important source of soft power. This is largely because; these values will only help in shaping the environment within the country. Nation-states with a liberal values and free environment will earn more attraction in comparison to the non-democratic country. Moreover, the values which a nation state adopts also shape its stand on international matter.

3. Foreign policy- It can also be considered as another important source of soft power. Nye himself acknowledges a country's foreign policies as a source of soft power (where they are

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seen as legitimate and having moral authority).[4] Policies reflect the intentions of the government, and when the policies of a nation state gain the support of their citizens as well as people around the world, this legitimizes their action and earns them a popularity on the world stage.

Domestic and International Policies and Actions- Filali and Gallarotti identify these two as one of the important source of soft power. They argue that domestic policies and actions of a nation-stateinclude culture (social cohesion, coherent of life, opportunity, tolerance, lifestyle and cultural significance) and Political System (political values, political institutions, leaderships). While International Policies and actions include-willingness to contribute to multi-lateral solutions to international problems, respect for international law, norms, regimes and institutions, fundamental reliance on cooperation and a reluctance to solve problems unilaterally, respect to international treaties and alliance commitments.[5]This in return shape their political values as well as foreign policy help them to brand their positive image in the world and thus attracting the world community.

Economic Development Model- Over the last few years, with growing discontent from 'Washington Consensus', developing countries are largely drifting towards 'Beijing Consensus'. This reflects that economic development model too has emerged as an important source of soft power. Wang & Lu argues that one of the sources of Chinese and Taiwan attraction comes from their economic development model.[6]This is because a successful economic development model will help in the development of a particular nation-state as well as branding of the nation whose model is being followed. This will help the country to earn their attraction in larger parts of the world.

Institutions- Institutions can also be recognized as the source of soft power. Institutions be it in the field such as education, entertainment, tourism, business environment, food culture, good service, and so on also attracts the world community towards the nation-state.These institutions not only help in capturing the attractiveness of country but also help in building the positive image of a nation.

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[4]Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
[5] Gallarotti, G. M. and Al-Filali, I. Y. (2013).The soft power of Saudi Arabia.*Division II Faculty Publication*.Paper 140.Retrieved from http://wesscholar.wesleyan.edu/div2facpubs/140
[6]Hongying, W. & Lu, Y. C. (2008). The conception of soft power: A comparative study of China and Taiwan. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 17 (56), 425-447.

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Soft power of India

India's power can be defined in terms of soft power in opposition to hard power. The impact of soft power is even visible in the foreign policy of India framed by its very first Prime Minister Mr. Nehru. As argued by Kennedy that "Nehru's personal sense of moral import in public diplomacy and his preferred use of soft power over hard power shaped the nature of India's early foreign policy"[7]Beside this, the presence of global icon such as Mahatma Gandhi (and his principle of satyagraha, truth and non-violence), Jawaharlal Nehru, and so on along with its long history and culture has always helped India to communicate to the world. Beside this, India's spiritualism, yoga, music, movies, television serials, foods, democratic institution and colorful election campaigning, plural society, monuments, and the list goes on have all attracted the people across the world. Acknowledging this, C Raja Mohan argues that "The Spiritualism of India has attracted people from all over the world, and its Gurus have travelled around the world selling yoga and mysticism. Bollywood has done more for Indian influence abroad than the bureaucratic efforts of the Government. From classical and popular music to its cuisine, from the growing impact of its writers and intellectuals, India now has begun to acquire many levers of soft power." He further said that "India holds strong cards in the arena of soft power" to enhance its foreign policy goals.[8]Bollywood has done more for Indian influence abroad than the bureaucratic efforts of the Government. From classical and popular music to its cuisine, from the growing impact of its writers and intellectuals, India now has begun to acquire many levers of soft power."[9]ShashiTharoor, former Union Minister of State for External Affairs is of the view that "it is not the size of the army or of the economy that matters (two dimensions where India has failed to compete with other great powers like China or the US) but instead it was the country that told the 'better story' would qualify as a global player." He also identifies the components of India's soft power "as diverse as films and Bollywood, yoga, ayurveda, political pluralism, religious diversity and openness to global influences."[10] Further, Rani D. Mullen too argues that "Indian soft power is no longer just about Bollywood, yoga, or global icons like Mahatma Gandhi. India's own identity as a developing country with entrenched democracy and rising economic growth

[7] David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan and SrinathRaghavan (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*, 188-201 UK: Oxford University Press
[8] Rohan Mukherjee, "The False Promise of India's Soft Power", *Geopolitics, History and International Relations*, volume 6(1), 2014, p.46.
[9] Rohan Mukherjee, "The False Promise of India's Soft Power", *Geopolitics, History and International Relations*, volume 6(1), 2014, p.46.
[10] Nicolas B. (n.d.). India's soft power: From potential to reality? Retrieved from http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf

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rates makes it an increasingly attractive development paradigm for other developing countries"[11]

Indian diplomats aware of India's long history of civilisational and cultural links with Central Asia, South East Asia and Middle East Asia have used it to establish and strengthen the relationship with these countries. Learning from China, who is strategically using soft power in its foreign policy to interact the world, India is too working to leverage its soft power through its foreign policy initiatives. India started different policy such as Look East Policy, Act East Policy, Link West Policy, Connect Central Asia Policy and enhancing its link with Africa. All these policies help India serve its two dimension goal-one serving its foreign policy goals and other in enhancing its image in the region targeted. This reflects that in this new world order, India began a concerted effort to channel these resources—including those of Indians living abroad, into generating soft power that might produce beneficial foreign policy outcomes.[12] However, according to scholars India lacks the proper strategy to tap its soft power assets.

Traditional Soft Power of India

India has always been a country of attraction. Since millennia it has attracted the countries of both East and West towards it. The attraction of India originates from its spiritual, artistic, learning centres, religious ideas and culture. Spread of Hinduism and Buddhism in the early century and the message of non-violence and yoga in twentieth century reflect the path which Indian ideas have travelled across the world. In regard to India being the knowledge centre, Basham says that "the perception of India across the world as a region of knowledge and wisdom has ancient roots and India has provided a source of learning and culture that has been drawn upon by cultures throughout history and across the world.[13] Jawaharlal Nehru, acknowledging the attraction of India, said in the Asian Relations Conference in 1947 that "streams of culture have come to India from the West and the East and been absorbed in India, producing the rich and variegated culture which is India today. At the same time, streams of culture have flowed from India to distant parts of Asia."[14] In regard to its civilization, Diana Eck said that India is a "land linked not by the power of kings and

[11]David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan and SrinathRaghavan (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*, 188-201 UK: Oxford University Press
[12]For detail one may refer to Ian Hall, India's New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power and Limits of Government Action, *Asian Survey* 52(6), pp. 1089-1110.
[13]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.
[14]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.

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governments, but by the footsteps of pilgrims".[15] Thus, it can be said that Indian products be its spirituality, arts, culture and so on holds the global appeal and played an important role in making its soft power global.

According to Thussu[16]the historical context of India's soft power arise from the following-

1. Sanskrit Cosmopolis- Sanskrit was for centuries the medium for elite communication. Pollock argues that Sanskrit was directed "toward articulating a form of political consciousness and culture, politics not as transaction of material power-the power-the power of recording deeds, contracts, tax records, and the like-but as celebration of aesthetic power".[17] Moreover, a large part of Sanskrit literature deals with mathematics, medicine, astronomy, law, philosophy, grammar, and phonetics. Sanskrit texts are considered as one of the most potent tool for cultural transmission of Indic culture in the ancient and pre-modern world. Pollock consider it as the most compelling model of power culture.

2. Spread of Buddhism- Buddhism-a religion which gives the message of equality and liberty-was founded by Gautam Buddha in sixth century BC in India., Buddhism spread from Southern and Central Asia, to Indonesia in the East and Alexandria in the Westthrough the trade routes. AmartyaSen recognizing the importance of Buddhism in Indian society argues that 'Buddhists should be given considerable credit for their commitment to discussion and dialogue as a means of social progress, and suggests that this is the reason India has remained a robust, non-Western democracy.'[18]Gradually with the assistance of various Indian rulers like Ashoka, Kushana King KanishkaBuddhism disseminated to different parts of the world. The religion also attracted the visitors from around the world such as Chinese pilgrims namely Fa-hien, Song-yun and Yuan Chwang. Since its communication to other parts of the world, it has gained a great feat. Buddhism has been recognised as one of the three major religions in China. It also became the state religion in Thailand and holds a great influence in countries like Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. This also became a great source of India soft power holding a global appeal.

3. Linkage of East & West Philosophy- Coming of East India Companyin India played an important role in transmission of knowledge from India to Western parts of the world.

[15]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.
[16]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.
[17]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.
[18]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.

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According to Clarke-East India Company provided the "main vehicle for thepassage of ideas between India and Europe". Beside this, the founding ofthe Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 by William Jones (1746–1794), played an important role in opening up the Indian classical culture to Europe, particularlythrough its journal "Asiatik Researches". Sanskrit culture and literaturewas introduced to the European educated classes via Jones's translation of Shakuntala by Kalidasain 1789 initiated European interest in Indian literature and philosophy.AsPanikkar notes: "the number of learned societies that existin every European country, to study, edit and interpret Indian texts is in itself a proof that the work of 'Asiatic Jones' in translating Shakuntala and in founding the Asiatic Society of Bengal were acts of momentous significance".[19]

4. Gandhi's Satayagraha and Non-violence- Gandhi served as apostle of India soft power. He attracted the world towards himself not only by the way he dressed but also through his writings and ideas. He was a prolific writer during his lifetime. His idea of non-violence, satyagraha, civil disobedience movement gained the popularity not only in India but in different other parts of the world. His ideas inspired anticolonial movements in many countries such as Ghana, South Africa. Political figures like Dalai Lama, Aung San SuuKyi, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and so on has been inspired by Gandhi. Even the peace movement around the world also takes the inspiration from Gandhi non-violent approach. Such as antinuclear protests by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Britain; the Green Party in Germany and the environmentalmovement in general, notably Greenpeace. Moreover, reading of Gandhi seems to be getting a greater degree ofattention, as a new comparative, and long-term study of "transnationalGandhism," attests, suggesting that his presence is "almostubiquitous".[20]

Thus, it can be said that historically India vast assets of soft power which has contributed towards its attraction without government initiatives. Ranging from its ancient knowledge of Sanskrit to Gandhi's non-violence and Nehru's Non-Alignment has significantly helped India to contribute to the world stock of knowledge. Recognising the contribution of ancient India in present world notable scholar Basham says that "we musttake account of her ancient

[19]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.
[20]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.

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heritage in its successes and its failures, for itis no longer the heritage of India alone, but of all mankind". [21]

Contemporary Trends of India's Soft Power

Historically and theoretically, India tops the soft power index as India soft power holds the tremendous global appeal be it in form cuisine, entertainment, discovery, knowledge, tourism and so on. But, in practical India's soft power remains weak. NicoloasBlarel identifies the two prominent reason for this weakness. First, he identifies the negligence of soft power as an important tool of statecraft by Indian Diplomats and only recently, it has understood the relevance of cultural diplomacy. Second, negligence towards the public diplomacy. He argues that goodwill of India has been generated abroad in an unplanned manner, but in order to tell a 'better story' a country needs to build on its soft power.[22]

However, in last few decades, India is taking a serious efforts to build its soft power strategy in order to better communicate with the world. Indian government too has realised that in present world, perception matters significantly in framing the foreign policy of a nation-state. In the wake of rising soft power, there are also few emerging trends in Indian soft power. These are-

1.Public Diplomacy- Ministry of External Affairs of India established Public Diplomacy Division in 2006 to advance India's conversations with the world. The institution was established with the aim to "influence public attitudes in a manner that they become supportive of its foreign policy and national interestsby 2013-2014, around 240 million rupees have been allocated to this new division.". This allows the diplomat to "intensify the dialogue on foreign policy issues with all segments of the society at home and abroad".

2. Indian Digital Diplomacy- In recent world, social media has emerged as the most powerful tool to create and destroy the perception of a country. The social media can also alter the electoral process of a country as can be seen with the examples of India and US in the last national election. Beside changing the perception, social media also provides the platform for two way communication. Acknowledging this role of social media, Indian Public Diplomacy Division opened the official account of its own Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Scribd, Issuu

[21]Thussu, D. (2013). *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*.Springer.
[22] Nicolas B. (n.d.). India's soft power: From potential to reality? Retrieved from http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf

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and Blogger. This initiative has helped the Public Diplomacy Division to act as a catalyst for other divisions of the Ministry of External Affairs as well as Indian Missions and posts abroad.

3. Culture and Learning Center- In the last few years, Indian diplomat has realized the potential of cultural diplomacy in foreign policy. Therefore, efforts are being made to incorporate the cultural and learning center as an important elemnt into a foreign policy. Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was established soon after independence with the aim "to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's cultural relations; to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries; to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people; and to develop relations with nations. Moreover, ICCR has set up around 22 cultural centers in 19 countries whose activites ranges from film festivals to book fairs and art exhibitions with an aim to present an image of India as a plural multicultural society. In recent year,Indian government has also been encouraging the use of Hindi abroad by organising an annual and rotating World Hindi Conference and by offering Hindi classes in its different centres.[23]

4. Promoting Democratic Model- Rani D. Mullen argues that "Indian soft power is no longer just about Bollywood, yoga, or global icons like Mahatma Gandhi. India's own identity as a developing country with entrenched democracy and rising economic growth rates makes it an increasingly attractive development paradigm for other developing countries". On realising the importance of its democratic achievements, India expanded its activities for the development of democracy abroad, in coordination with international community. According to Nicolas Blarel, in 2005 India joined the UN Democracy Fund and contributed $25 million to it, making it the second biggest donor after the US ($38 million). Electoral assistance, programs to strengthen the rule of law and to fight against corruption are few activities which India performs. At regional level, India has decided to link its development assistance with the projects of democracy promotion. The example of Afghanistan can be understood under this. India has pursued the soft power strategy to gain friendliness of Afghan by delivering $1.3 billion in economic and logistical assistance. India has helped in the reconstruction of Afghanistan through aid for building infrastructure like dams and roads and providing

[23] Nicolas B. (n.d.). India's soft power: From potential to reality? Retrieved from http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf

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scholarships for Afghan students. This has helped India to build a positive image of it in Afghanistan. According to poll by ABC/BBC/ARD in 2009, 74 percent of Afghani holds the favorable image of India in contrast to 91 percent who holds the unfavourable opinions of Pakistan. Similarly, India has also provided democratic assistance to Bhutan and other South Asian countries.[24]

5. Cultural Resources- Culture of a nation-state also holds the power of attraction and influence. Culture composed of arts, language, literature, cuisine. According to T.V Paul India's traditional and modern art gaining the recognition abroad. Similarly, Indian cuisine are also making a global appeal. In countries like UK, it is now the most preferred international food. North Indian as well as South Indian food are gaining the recognition abroad. In English literature world also Indian author with the description of India are presenting the image of India to the world. Their themes are often related to India or Indian diaspora. Some of these are-Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Abraham Verghese,RohintonMistry, Vikram Seth, AmitavGhosh, AravindAdiga, Kiran Desai, V.S.Naipaul and so on. In this category, Yoga also holds the important position and gains the international attention since UN has accepted June 21 as Yoga day.

7. Pluralist nature of India- Apart from culture political values and norms too holds the power of attraction. Pluralist nature of Indian politics and society also provides a soft power to India. Mainly to the developing countries India has developed the image of a country which stand against the colonialism, imperialism and division of the world into two bloc during cold war. In Africa, India has promoted its image as a country which inspired the anti-colonial struggles of the last century and took a strong principled stand against apartheid in order to develop future partnerships in Africa.[25] India is also admired for the for its diverseness- a society with multiple language, religion, regional difference, festivals, culture and many more has remained in one piece since its independence. In this globalizing world, India offers an example of multiculturalism. However, internal problem do exists in Indian pluralist and multi-cultural society, but still being a land of multi-colors it still provides the platform to India to exercise its soft power. 'Incredible India' campaign by Ministry of Tourism is one such campaign to leverage India's soft power to the world community.

[24] Nicolas B. (n.d.). India's soft power: From potential to reality? Retrieved from http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf
[25] Nicolas B. (n.d.). India's soft power: From potential to reality? Retrieved from http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf

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8. Entertainment Industry- Indian films particularly Bollywood has played an important role in creating and defining India to the foreign country. Indian movies are greatly watched in Asia, Middle East and Africa and these are now spreading to Western countries in the last few years. According to a report by EY and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). Box office collections for Indian films overseas in 2017 was $367 million-which has grown by almost three times from $125 million the year before. This year earnings are expected to do just as well and may rise to $411 million in 2020- up by 12 percent from 2017.[26] "Dangal" by Aamir Khan became the top grossing Indian movie abroad and the highest grossing non-Hollywood foreign movie in China. In recent years China has emerged as a highly profitable market for Indian movies.[27] Apart from Hindi language movie, Tamil Language and Telugu Language movie are also doing well in international market. Rajnikant has huge fan following different parts of the world. Tamil language drama like *Velaikkaran* ("The Worker") collected around $228,000 / ・ 1.46 crore in USA. Similarly, Telugu language drama like *Middle Class Abbayi*has overcome mixed reviews to top ・ 30 crore worldwide in the past week. Similarly, *Hello* has generated $713,000 / ・ 4.57 crore in its first five days in the USA.[28] There are few movies which have gain recognition at international platform. Such as- Lagaan, Dil Se, Devdas, Earth, Dangal, 3 Idiots and the list goes on. Thus, the entertainment industry provide the powerful assets for projecting India's soft power to the world.

9. Diaspora- The biggest instrument of India in the world is diaspora community. Mr. Sinha points out that "people of Indian origin are extremely important sources of support for the Indian government in the execution of its policies through the influence and respect they command in the countries in which they live."[29] Indian diaspora plays an important role in disseminating soft power assets of India to the region in which they are residing. Several initiatives are being taken by the Government for engaging the Indian Diaspora around the world. Some of the major initiatives are-PravasiBhartiya Divas, Regional PravasiBhartiya Divas, Know India Programme, Study India Programme, Scholarship Programme for

[26] ParthVohra, *CNBC*, 2 Aug 2018https://www.cnbc.com/2018/08/03/indian-films-attract-millions-globally-and-it-appears-to-be-growing.html
[27] ParthVohra, *CNBC*, 2 Aug 2018https://www.cnbc.com/2018/08/03/indian-films-attract-millions-globally-and-it-appears-to-be-growing.html
[28] Rob Cain, *Forbes*, 27 Dec. 2017 https://www.forbes.com/sites/robcain/2017/12/27/indias-movies-are-rocking-it-overseas/#43f569332e9d
[29] Mohan, Raja C, *The Hindu*, 6 Jan. 2003 https://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/2003/01/06/stories/2003010604431100.htm

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Diaspora Children, Tracing the Roots and issues Overseas Citizen of India(OCI) cards for eligible applicants from the Indian diaspora abroad irrespective of their region, caste or creed.PravasiBhartiya Divas is one of the largest diaspora engagements in the world. In addition to this, PravasiBhartiyaSamman Awards are also given to distinguished NRIs/PIOs for excellence in various fields. Moreover, new programmes for the Indian Diaspora abroad are formulated by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs from time to time taking into account the various needs for engaging the Indian Diaspora.[30]

Conclusion- Soft Power is all about influence and attraction. The country which gains the more attraction in the world community is more liable to generate a hegemony. Hegemony of USA through its attraction is the best example to understand the influence which a soft power can have. India has full capabilities in terms of its entertainment industry, culture, political values, and diaspora and so on but the exercise of these element is low in comparison to other powers of the world like US, China, and Britain. Though, Indian governments are taking the effort to tap the soft power assets of India but much more is needed to be done.

[30] Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.Indian diaspora abroad.http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=106333

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