



Soft power and its place in American foreign policy

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Abstract

Today, one of the key concepts in the field of international relations and in the adoption of foreign policy by governments is extremely important and influential, is the term "soft power". The main purpose of this article is to answer the question, what is soft power and what is its place in United States foreign policy? The research also describes "power," "foreign policy," and "American foreign policy." In response to the above questions, this research states that the term "soft power" was coined by Joseph Nye in 1990 and means "the ability to achieve what we want; through attraction, not through coercion." In the aftermath of World War II, the United States did not consider it appropriate to use the resources of hard power in formulating foreign policy and maintaining its supreme position due to changes at the international level, and instead used concepts such as democracy, human rights, and the free economy, He introduced as a common global values and considered itself the only worthy power to preserve and promote these values as a world leader. The United States, as the great power of the world, has the soft tools and resources of power and has the capacity to use them and become the leader of the world; But the United States is more concerned with its hegemonic power and uses the sources of soft power as a cover for its dominance to bring governments with it. Which has also imposed a great cost on the world.

Keywords: power, soft power, foreign policy, USA and hard power.

Introduction

The subject of this article is "soft power and its place in American foreign policy". Power forms the basis of all political activity as follows: The more politicians know about the nature and type of the ruling power, the more successful their activities and the desired results. The new definition of "power" given by the American scientist Joseph Nye was addressed to the United States to regulate its foreign policy in view of international changes in order to maintain its position as a world superpower. It is necessary for all governments to be familiar with the nature of the ruling power and how to use it in order to act consciously in formulating foreign policy and establishing relations with other governments. This research seeks to answer the question: What is soft power and what is its place in US foreign policy? The term soft power has been in the political discourse ever since Harvard professor Joseph Nye used it in his 1990 book *The Inevitability of Leadership*. With the publication of the book *Soft Power: Success Methods in World Politics*, he strengthened it and gave it more prominence in the book *Leadership Powers*. After World War II, with changes in international relations, the United States adopted a new form of power in its foreign policy called "soft power" in order to maintain its position as a world superpower and to become a world leader.

Research question

What is soft power and what is its place in US foreign policy?

Research hypothesis

Soft power means being able to attract others and direct their priorities in the direction we want. The United States, as the world's great power, has recently used the tools of soft power to maintain its superior position; It seems that the United States is not interested in leading the world, but wants to act in the name of soft power and world leadership to maintain its dominance, both of which cannot be combined.

Importance and Necessity of Research

After World War II, the status and effectiveness of tyranny and hegemony gradually diminished in the foreign policy of governments. After the independence of countries and the development of communications and information, the use of force and threats did not work. Powerful countries realized that in order to maintain and maintain power, they had to resort to tools that would attract public opinion and increase their followers by influencing and directing them.

In the use of soft power, two issues are discussed. First, some countries use soft power as a deceptive tool due to lack of awareness or ignorance of the nature of soft power, but this is not actually the application of soft power, but its misuse because in soft power, public values and needs must be considered not merely the interests and hegemony of the great powers. Second, audiences and subordinate governments must recognize soft power in order to discern whether a government as a leader wants to develop public values or is merely seeking to dominate the world. Therefore, it is necessary for both the executors of soft power and the audience to be familiar with the concept of soft power and how to apply it, because any ignorance of it will cause mistakes in the practical field. On the other hand, the United States, as a hegemonic power, claims to develop and preserve world values. We need to know what is the place of soft power in American foreign policy? Is America pulling governments to lead or to dominate?

Research Objectives

Main objective: Familiarity with the concept of soft power and its place in American foreign policy.

Sub-objectives

1. Familiarity with the concept of foreign policy
2. Familiarity with US foreign policy

Background of the Research

Numerous books and articles have been written on the concept of "soft power and its place in American foreign policy," especially by Joseph Nye, who coined the term soft power. Some of these books include: "Soft Power" by Joseph Nye, "Soft Power in America's Middle East Strategy" by Fatemeh Soleimani Purlak, "Soft Power and US Foreign Policy" by Indergit Parmar and Michael Cox, "Power and Balance" Soft in International Politics "by Joseph Nye, Robert Pope and etc.; large number of research papers that have been done in this regard. Only a part of the issue not at all. in some other books the subject has been expressed in a very broad and complex way so that It can be understood at excellent scientific levels. Some of these works also discuss soft power in US foreign policy on a case-by-case basis, not in US foreign policy in general. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive and complete research on soft power and its place in American foreign policy.

Research Methodology

To complete this research, the library method has been used and an attempt has been made to write an article with scientific criteria with using the limited resources which is available. Also, the nature of this research is analytical-descriptive.

The concept of power

One of the most important issues in international politics is the definition of power because politics without power has no meaning. Power has been considered by many political scientists as the central concept of the organization of a system. Perhaps the most objective supporter of this situation is H. G. Morgenthau. In *The Politics of Nations*, Morgenthau states that power is the immediate goal of politics, even in international politics, and that whatever does not imply it is not political and should not be considered political. Political power refers to the existence of control over the reciprocal relations of those in power, and between public authority and the general public. Another definition of him is "man's ability to control the minds and actions of others."

The concept of foreign policy

Foreign policy includes the goals of governments in their relations with other governments and the choice of tools and ways to achieve those goals. Foreign policy involves complex communication between governments as well as between various actors, in addition to misconceptions, imaginations of other countries, and the individual ideologies and tendencies of those involved in foreign policy. Therefore, an important part of foreign policy is the nature and impact of domestic policy. In discussing foreign policy and its nature, several points should be noted:

1. Foreign policy is formed and applied in a set of two, domestic and international environments.
2. The nature of foreign policy is adopted from domestic policy issues.
3. Only through multilevel and polymorphic analysis of sources and the complex nature of foreign policy is understood.

Analysis of American Foreign Policy

Scrutiny the foreign policy of the United States of America as a powerful and influential state in international politics is very important and necessary. Although the foreign policy of governments is usually in the direction of achieving their national interests and national goals, the foreign policy of powerful governments also plays a constructive role in directing the foreign policy of other governments and regulating international relations.

Given the facts that can be gleaned from US foreign policy; Regarding the concept of American foreign policy, we mention a few specific cases.

1. On the one hand, American foreign policy is a kind of surrender based on what Waltz proposes; Therefore, the characteristics of the United States of America as one of the main units of the international system, which also plays an important role in international politics, is influenced by the international system. On the other hand, international politics is concerned with the characteristics of the international system. is not. An important feature of US foreign policy is that, given its weight in structure, it plays a greater role in shaping international policy than any other country. This makes it difficult to separate foreign policy from international policy in the study of American foreign policy.
2. In American foreign policy, constructivism has a descriptive and explanatory function at the same time. In this view, the US government is not accepted as an external entity. American foreign policy is also understood in the light of differences. Differences establish America's national political identity in experience and practice. American foreign policy is a tool of identity building, demarcating boundaries between oneself and another, and the process of defining one's national interests. US foreign policy is a critical factor in shaping the government and its international environment. Identity, however, is a mediating concept that only makes sense when it comes to "America" itself and its relationship to others.

Soft Power

Soft power refers to a set of cultural-principled components; Components such as the promotion of democracy around the world, the spread of human rights, the spread of the free market economy, American specialism, and the American mission that has played an important role in identifying and identifying the United States and its policies since its inception. From Joseph Nye's point of view, power is divided into hard and soft parts. Hard power is used over economic and military capabilities, and soft power is the ability of one country to force other countries to do what it wants; It is through its cultural and ideological attractions. Soft power in its modern sense was first introduced by Joseph Nye in 1990. "If the United States spends only 2 percent of its gross domestic product on a program that promotes both domestic education and effective aid and information, it will have a different power and deeper power than hard power," he said. It is called "soft power." He argued in this book that, contrary to the prevailing world view of the decline of the United States, it showed that the United States is the strongest country not only in terms of military and economic power, but also in the third dimension called soft power. Nye first defined the concept: "Soft power is the ability to get what we want; It is through attraction, not coercion. "This kind of power is gained through relations with allies, economic aid, and cultural exchanges," Nye writes. Thus, in the original sense, soft power was defined as the power of attraction; "It's what we want.

Soft Power Sources

According to Joseph Nye, the soft power sources of any country are largely rooted in three fundamental sources: culture, political values, and foreign policy. In fact, these three intangible and intangible sources are opposed to the tangible and tangible sources of hard power, including military tools and equipment. These three main sources can help countries to achieve their desired goals at the international level, and any country that has the appropriate level of these dimensions can optimally withstand currents and threats of the soft material, and in addition, it reproduces power, especially from soft materials.

1: Culture

Culture is a set of values and practices that give meaning to society. Culture has various manifestations. It is accepted to distinguish between high culture such as literature, art and education, which attracts the elite, and popular culture, which is based on the fortunes of the masses. When a country's culture embraces universal values and its policies promote values and interests in which others share, then because of attraction, the likelihood of achieving the desired results for its Country provided.

Nye believes that when a country's culture incorporates global values and its policies are based on shared global interests and values, the likelihood of achieving the desired results increases. Nye believes that cultural elements can be a source of soft power in any case, depending on how the country uses it. For example, in eighteenth-century Europe, the spread of the French language and culture was a source of authority. The power of language as one of the immaterial elements of culture is quite clear, and English is now regarded as one of the main sources of soft power in England. Of course, it is quite clear that the results of using soft power as opposed to hard power, especially its cultural type, will be borne in the long run and require a lot of patience from the government, because Nye believes that contrary to the policy levers in It is in the hands of the government, culture and values are rooted in civil society. Therefore, the development of civil societies and the strengthening of cultural, national and patriotic values will raise the national spirit and the sense of national trust for the use of soft power.

2: Political values

Political values become identities when they are the criterion for action. Political values themselves are part of the political culture of any nation. "Every political culture is a specific distribution of political beliefs, values, feelings, information, and skills," says Almond and Powell in defining political culture and its characteristics. Just as individuals' beliefs affect their actions, a nation's political culture influences the behavior of citizens and leaders throughout the political system. Political values can be a measure of the power and capacity of a political system or school in the face of internal and external crises. So that if the political values of a school or system become a global proposition, it will be much easier to communicate and act and react with the elements of the world system, and vice versa, if the political values are opposite and in the opposite direction to the values. If the political system is strong, the international system will face resistance, elimination and adjustment. "American beliefs and values are issued through students who graduate each year and return to their home countries," Nye says, for example. Most Chinese leaders have an American-educated son or daughter. High-level contacts often provided soft power for the United States during the Cold War. The transformation of a country's political values in the domestic, regional and international dimensions and the belief and trust in their correctness and efficiency in times of need and the emphasis on their implementation by the government and the nation can be promising to use this resource. Soft power to achieve the desired goals.

3: Desirability of Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of any country at the international level reflects the goals, aspirations and worldview of that country and in a way the appearance of each country in its external environment. Countries can present a beautiful, distinctive and legitimate face to the world, or vice versa, an ugly, unrecognizable and illegitimate face. These depend heavily on the performance of foreign policy and its agents, a point that Joseph Nye points to in terms of foreign policy desirability as a source of soft power. If others consider it legitimate and accept its moral authority. In fact, according to Nye, it is the form of foreign policy that he considers that others (the international community) consider legitimate (legal and in accordance with internationally accepted norms) and moral authority (no harm to accepted human values) Accept it. As the political legitimacy of a country increases in the minds and public opinion of the world; The level of international cooperation will be developed proportionately, because political units can only identify the interests and goals of a country through cooperation, relations and cultural exchanges.

The Place of Soft Power in American Foreign Policy

According to Joseph Nye's definition of soft power, which is a nation's ability to attract others without the use of military coercion, economic pressure, or deception, its sources include cultural attractiveness, political ideals, and the policies of a country. Accordingly, the ability to shape the desires of others using the power of attraction and persuasion is the most key component in this regard. According to this definition, cultural attractiveness, the importance and acceptance of domestic institutions, democratic values, and the pursuit of multilateral policies are the main sources of American soft power.

According to various experts, the most important use of this aspect of power is to increase the legitimacy and correct the negative image of this country among the countries of the world. That is why today, soft power has a very important place in American foreign policy and is one of the main reasons for maintaining its global superiority in international equations. Moreover, with the end of the Cold War, as many neoliberal thinkers in international relations spoke of the formation of a US-led unipolar system, the United States was able to live up to its predictions by increasing its soft power.

American politicians themselves have acknowledged the importance of this issue in gaining and maintaining global hegemony. For example, Sandy Berger, the national security adviser, stated in a speech in 1999: "The United States, using its democratic values and collective security, seeks supreme power and does not want to become an imperialist power." The 2002 National Security Document also states that the United States

seeks to achieve global hegemony through policies such as the promotion of freedom, the balance of power, and democracy, and avoids unilateral policies. In addition, today, the intelligent aspect of power, which arises from the combination of its soft and hard aspects, has become very important in analyzing the capabilities of different countries in the world. In a general definition, it can be said that this concept includes hard and soft strategies to increase the legitimacy and influence of countries such as investment in military force, alliance, international institutions and public and multilateral diplomacy.

That is why the US diplomatic and foreign policy apparatus focuses on strategies such as nation-building, the promotion of democracy, and economic aid to increase this aspect of its power in various parts of the world, especially in the Middle East. However, due to the lack of humanitarian foundations, lack of necessary capacities and profit-oriented policies, the country has not been able to achieve significant success in this area. Apart from this, as the evidence shows, especially in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia, the country relies more on the use of military force to promote democracy, economic and political reforms. Indeed, the success of political reform in different parts of the world requires preconditions such as advanced economics, civil and political harmony between different religious, political and ethnic groups, democratic political culture, civil society institutions, and institutional capacities. The Middle East, like Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan, lacks these preconditions, and this has led to the failure of US plans.

Liberal theorists of international relations and realists who believe in the balance of the threat attribute America's successful domination to the fact that American domination is benevolent. According to them, if the United States demonstrates restraint by exercising its superiority in a multilateral way through international institutions, other governments will not oppose US domination. America's "soft power," the seemingly unparalleled appeal of American political and economic institutions and its culture, is said to attract other governments to Washington. Prominent supporters of soft power openly see it, along with multilateralism, as a means of supporting US domination. As Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye put it, "The goal of US foreign policy should be to perpetuate and maintain American supremacy as a benevolent actor, without having strong, enthusiastic allies and partners who can reach out to the United States." "It is impossible to set priorities and help them act.

A good example of how soft power is seen as a tool to maintain US dominance is Farid Zakaria's book. Not only does Zakaria not see the United States as declining at all, but he claims that the world is following the American way in terms of modernization, globalization, human rights and democracy. In other words, America's soft power shapes international politics. In this world, America has the opportunity to "remain the sole central player in a richer, more vibrant and more vibrant world." The only thing the United States must do to maintain its leading role in world politics is to reject the unilateralism that characterizes the Bush administration. Instead, the United States should return only to its (alleged) tradition of operating through multilateral institutions and relying on diplomacy and persuasion. Zakaria says the United States could be at the center of the international system for a long time because "for both geopolitical and economic reasons, there is still a thriving market for American power, but more importantly, there is still strong ideological demand." The United States can continue to pursue "consultative, cooperative, and even compromise" in order to build the will of the rising powers to be recognized, to avoid forcing its own preferences on the rest of the world, and to engage in "consultation, cooperation, and even compromise." Stay. Zakaria makes it clear that soft power is even more important than hard power when it comes to supporting supremacy and supporting the United States.

The fact that the United States is a liberal democracy is another reason why American researchers and policymakers see their country as a supreme benevolent power. John Eikenberry and Charles Kopkan have argued that the democratic and liberal nature of the US domestic political system legitimizes US domination and at the same time reassures others of its benevolence, and attracts US tolerance. But this claim is based on dubious reasons. Certainly, there is much evidence to suggest that the quality of international politics in democracies differs from that between democracies and non-democracies.

America's Soft Power Sources

1. Economic Solutions

Economic solutions in the form of financial aid is one of the most important sources of soft power in this country. For example, the Marshall Plan increased US soft power in Western Europe after World War II by making it attractive to American culture and economic policies; Because by adopting American economic policies such as federalism, free markets and democracy, these countries have been influenced by its cultural values and norms, and consequently the American way of life has penetrated throughout European society. In addition to the above-mentioned countries, during the same period, Japan was completely influenced by its lifestyle and culture due to receiving economic and military aid and the expansion of public diplomacy.

2. Training Transnational Elites

In addition to international cooperation and economic assistance, the training of transnational elites in the country's universities is another very important source for promoting the country's soft power. According to Nye, they can become the best promoters of the culture, politics and lifestyle of this country and provide the right conditions for the success of foreign policy and its national interests.

The importance of this issue is such that even the limited sending of Eastern Bloc students to the country greatly reduced the communist threat during the Cold War. Also, scientific exchanges with West Germany and Japan not only paved the way for the normalization of relations between the two countries with the United States; Rather, by increasing the attractiveness of the American education system, it somehow promoted its soft power by spreading American values, culture, and lifestyle.

3. The Growth of Science and Technology

Scientific advances are another factor that is very important in this regard. According to a 2002 Pew Institute survey of the country's attractiveness factors, 80 percent of respondents in Europe, the United States, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the seven Muslim countries (which have the largest Muslim populations) The issue was described as American scientific and technological progress. On the other hand, the reason for this was considered to be cultural exports such as music, films, and television programs. In fact, because scientific and technological progress is a tool to convince more foreign audiences, it can play a very important role in this regard. Also, in today's world where the world is experiencing greater interdependence, its technological advantages and superiority, especially in the field of information, have greatly contributed to this issue.

4. Universities and Educational Institutions

These institutions have a very important role in this regard; Because they can increase the attractiveness of domestic and foreign policies by providing the necessary grounds for a better understanding of power, domestic and foreign policies, and how the world is changing under the influence and hegemony of this country.

During the Cold War, for example, the country combined its hard and soft capabilities against the Eastern bloc to counter communist ideas. During this period, cultural and educational exchanges that formed the basis of the cultural war against the Eastern bloc; It played a very important role in increasing the soft power of the United States. It was in line with these plans that between 1988 and 1958, about 50,000 Russian experts and elites visited the United States. After the Cold War, the country tried to take steps in this direction by facilitating scholarship and visa policies for students around the world.

5. Influence on the World Political System

Increasing influence and impact on the global system after World War II is another very important factor in this regard. This is not just an economic issue, but also includes political and cultural issues such as advocacy for democracy, human rights and world peace. Of course, after the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, this aspect of American influence was significantly damaged. The global economic crisis has also greatly diminished the legitimacy of the American capitalist model. In addition, from the perspective of public opinion, the country does not have the capacity to implement appropriate solutions for a successful human rights, democracy and free economy. Nevertheless, in comparison with European countries or competitors such as China, it can be said that this country has still been able to appear as a representative of these values and maintain its influence on the world political and economic system.

6. Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy, which includes the United States' efforts to influence, negotiate, and shape the minds of non-governmental audiences around the world and to achieve its foreign policy goals, is an important source of promoting soft power from the Cold War to the present. It is now. International information programs, educational and cultural exchanges, and the broadcasting of civilian programs internationally are three very important components of this type of diplomacy.

The importance of public diplomacy has led the country to pay special attention to it since World War I, so much so that in recent years it has tried, with the help of the Ministry of Defense and its military, to play a wider role in communicating with the people of foreign countries. Show. There are currently about 14 ministries and 48 independent agencies and commissions working with Congress, the executive branch, think tanks and academia, and non-governmental organizations.

Conclusion

Power plays a central role in all political issues, and one of those issues is "foreign policy." Power is like air, everyone talks about it and depends on it, but few people understand about it. Governments determine and regulate their relations with each other in the framework of "foreign policy" based on the tools and sources of power, as well as how they are used, and the set of policies that shape international relations. In line with the development of international relations, a new interpretation of the concept of power has recently been proposed, called "soft power."

Soft power refers to the kind of power that a state has the ability to achieve what it wants, through attraction, not coercion. Soft power has a long history theoretically in the form of different words, but the use of the term by Joseph Nye refers to US foreign policy after World War II. After World War II, due to fundamental changes in international relations, the United States did not find it appropriate to use hard power resources in foreign policy and maintain its superior position, and used soft power resources in regulating its relations with other governments. In terms of soft power, any country is largely rooted in three fundamental sources: culture, political values, and foreign policy. Based on these sources, the United States has introduced concepts such as democracy, human rights, and a free economy as global values, and in order to maintain and develop these values, it has declared itself the only worthy government and world leader. The United States has always sought to engage governments with the implementation and development of these values around the world, but has had little success. What the United States put forward as world values was not global because it did not take into account the needs and situation of governments and different regions of the world.

For this reason, the repulsion of these values is greater than the absorption power, and the United States, using military and economic tools, threatens and encourages governments to accept and implement the values. The same values that the United States calls common global values are considered and rejected by many governments as contrary to their values and needs, as their implementation in these regions has

increased chaos and crisis, which has cost a lot of money. Has applied to the world. Promoting democracy, regardless of cultural context, in the Middle East and underdeveloped countries shows America's lack of understanding of the world and its situation. The values presented by the United States Are American values or, ultimately, regional values; Which does not have the ability and capacity to regulate the situation in the world. The United States itself does not believe in the commonality of these values and acts against them whenever its interests demand; And has acted. The United States does not have a goal or interest in leading the world; its goal is to secure America's goals and interests and maintain its dominance. Pretend.

Both types of power, soft power and hard power, are needed to achieve the goals of a government and to regulate foreign policy. Soft power alone cannot meet all the needs of politics, for example, in defending the borders of a country, countering the immediate attacks of the enemy, military and economic tools are more effective. Soft power is a long-term process and is more suited to macro-policies. Soft power is better than hard power when it seeks to adapt and develop common global values and engage governments through attraction, but it is worthless if soft power is used as a means to deceive others; Because no one likes to be deceived. Islamic countries are not against the United States, but against the unilateral policies of the United States; Which does not take into account the values and needs of these countries and mostly uses military and economic tools to impose its values. The United States has the sources of soft power that Joseph Nye has outlined; By abandoning unilateralism and paying attention to the interests and needs of the world, he can become a leader and bring many governments with him.

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