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Research Article

Cultural Diplomacy: A Tool for Pakistan's Positive Image Internationally

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Abstract

Cultural Diplomacy can most aptly be defined as a course of actions centred on using the interchanging of views, ethics, customs, and other features of a culture. Cultural Diplomacy is employed by the public sector, private sector, and civil society to either accelerate socio-cultural collaboration, fortify the relationship or endorse the state wellbeing. Pakistan has long been suffering from a negative image globally on account of her poor foreign policy and her adversaries' vile propaganda. Notwithstanding Pakistan is archaeologically, historically, and culturally rich and a thriving country and is home to an assortment of cultures but she could never efficaciously liberate herself from the stigmas attached to her. Cultural Diplomacy is one of the most noteworthy tactics that can pull Pakistan out of this mayhem and restore her image internationally. In this article, the authors delve into exploring the tools of cultural diplomacy, which Pakistan can put into the best utilization to cultivate enhanced perception on the international platform.

Keywords: Public Diplomacy, Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power, Cultural Exchange Program, Social Media, Tourism, Sports.

1. Introduction

The activities encouraged and supported by the government to directly communicate with the foreign people are called public diplomacy. All attempts made officially to persuade the targeted segments of foreign outlook to either support or condone the strategic goals of a government are part of public diplomacy. The statements issued by decision-makers, the campaigns aimed at achieving something that is carried out by government organizations and exclusively for public diplomacy along with attempts to induce international media to show official policies that are beneficial for a foreign audience are methods or techniques of public diplomacy (Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2017).

Cultural diplomacy is a type of public diplomacy, where states try to seek their long-term goals through exposing their culture to foreign publics. It aims at winning the hearts and minds of the targeted audience. By displaying the positive image of the culture, their tradition, states succeed in gathering the positive perception among the outer world. The best definition of cultural diplomacy is, "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding". CD is the vital "soft"

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substitute to a more "aggressive" type of diplomacy. Cultural Diplomacy cultivates many tools of cultural and artistic lives in a way that may make "hearts and souls" meet across borders (Norrman, 2013).

Cultural diplomacy also consists of people exchange programs between different countries which allows people to visit different countries and acquire knowledge about diverse countries' cultures and societies. Learning the language, traditions, and lifestyle of another country is also a kind of cultural diplomacy. Culture is a very wide-ranging term; hence it plays a part in a broad range of fields that come under cultural diplomacy's delineation. For example, literature, the arts in broad-spectrum, customs, habits and tradition, manners of humans, history, music, folk tales, gesticulations, and social relationships are included in culture. Hence, any dealings or exchange of people between the two countries in one of these fields is regarded as cultural diplomacy (Chandio, 2016).

As denoted by Joseph Nye, a Harvard University Professor, the deployment of "soft power" is essential for cultural diplomacy. According to Nye, soft power "rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others" (Nye, 2004). It has been specified by Nye that "the soft power of a country rests primarily on three sources: its culture, its political value, and its foreign policies (Yavuzaslan & Çetin, 2016). Cultural diplomacy allows a country to make its political beliefs more beautiful for foreign people by showing its culture, society, and people to other countries and expanding links among the people of other countries. When a country's culture includes universal values, it increases the probability of obtaining its desired outcomes because of the relationship between attraction and duty that it creates. Cultural diplomacy is a two-way process of connection which includes the exertions to foster the image and values of a nation among different foreign audiences and also an attempt to comprehend different countries' and their people's culture, values, and images. Cultural diplomacy is one of the most underutilized tools in Pakistan. The policymakers could avail cultural diplomacy to promote a positive image of the country (Buledi, 2019).

2. Methods and Materials

This study is qualitative, descriptive, and theoretical in nature. The data is predominantly centred on secondary sources since the paucity of resources hampered to collect the primary data. Secondary data encompasses numerous books, professionals' viewpoints, several research articles, websites, magazines, and journals. The secondary source employed for data collection is indirect information as someone else has previously gathered the knowledge for another objective and this information has been preserved to be utilized by other researchers. The researchers reassess the available second-hand data to evaluate and recommend refined as well as thoughtful views regarding the necessity of cultural diplomacy in Pakistan.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Significance of Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy is the method used by the governments to upturn admiration and understanding of themselves among different countries of the world. As appropriately stated by former Deputy Assistant and Associate Director of the USIA (United States Information Agency) Gifford Malone, "If we strive to be successful in our efforts to create understanding for our society and our policies, we must first understand the motives, culture, history, and

psychology of the people with whom we wish to communicate and certainly their language". Cultural diplomacy programs have enormous advantages. These programs formulate various forums for dealings and communication amongst people of other countries, which results in setting a foundation for building firm and amicable relations between the people of other nationalities. Cultural diplomacy facilitates establishing a "foundation of trust" between different people. Policymakers can build on this trust to create political, economic, and military agreements (Appel *et al.*, 2008).

Cultural diplomacy lets accessing influential members of foreign societies who cannot be reached through traditional embassy functions. For instance, through the cultural diplomacy programs, foreign society, people, and economy are exposed to businessmen and investors which may lead to huge economic investments in this country by these investors and businessmen. Furthermore, cultural diplomacy programs are frequently intended for young people. Due to better cultural dealings with the youth in other countries, a country can have an affirmative effect on those people who, someday, may turn out to be an extremely powerful leader in their states (Appel *et al.,* 2008).

3.2. Other States and Cultural Diplomacy

Keeping in view the example of America, culture can be perceived as a means of soft power that creates attraction. For instance, denying and escaping the charm of the "American dream" and the American way of life as perpetrated through Hollywood and mass media is not an easy task. Various English Language Teaching (ELT) institutes are working in several countries and its fast-food culture has grown into global franchises and is turning into household names such as Starbucks and McDonald. These are impeccable manifestations of soft power and may be regarded as 'weapons of mass attraction' as well. In History, there are many examples where the U.S use Cultural Diplomacy tactics in order to gain a soft image e.g. "Amerika" was the magazine that was published by the U.S to mould the perception of Soviet people and to create a soft corner for U.S in Soviets during Cold war (Melissen, 2005). Today, America is also conducting its soft power policy through massive information exertions as well as positively presenting its foreign policy, particularly by using social media. For instance, all US embassies have created Facebook pages and are used by all American ambassadors and resource centres in the Central Asian States. They expansively count on other social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, My Space, etc. to broadcast the imperative official information to people (Shah *et al.*, 2016).

Talking about Chinese cultural diplomacy, the CNP or Comprehensive National power of China is similar to the soft power version of Nye. CNP refers to the total economic, armed forces, scientific, and technology might of a nation in terms of sources and impact. It is a union of hard, soft, and coordinating power which encompasses the political structure, administration leadership, and organization and the abilities of reorganization. China has adopted a policy of non-interference, which has made it possible for China to divert the attention of the world from its internal issues such as Lack of democracy, carelessness towards Chinese Diaspora, and piracy and border conflicts (Khan, 2019). Other than that China is working enormously on its cultural diplomacy. For instance, most of the Pakistani universities have their China Study Centres, where Pakistani youth participates in various Chinese festivals. There are different shows on Chinese culture which portray a soft image of China. In its essence, Beijing has a very successful cultural diplomacy in this regard.

By using the soft power and public diplomacy, India has well created the delusions of "shining India" and "Made in India" through adroit schemes and clever policies. India is gaining superiority about global charisma and power as compared to China, through its "liberal democratic regime". India has given special attention to soft power tactics since the 1990s and successfully attained desirable results in the form of pleasant relations with Afghanistan after all its strife. Under the headship of former President Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan had developed more agreeable terms with India than its close neighbouring country, Pakistan. India is working tremendously in Afghanistan through soft power tactics in order to gather the Afghans' perception in their favour (Mughal, 2018). Apart from that India is promoting its image of being a soft power by constructing educational institutions, infrastructure, and other welfare activities in many states. In terms of the IT industry, India is one of the most attractive destinations in the world. Its achievement has invigorated the economy of the country and has displayed its soft power around the world as well (Kugiel, 2012). India has used its media very effectively because, in Indian dramas and movies, they portray their culture by showing their customs and traditions. Even though it has built its soft image in the whole world, yet some issues are creating obstacles in the way to India not to completely benefit from the prospects of soft power.

Russia is also adopting many cultural diplomacy tactics to portray its positive image. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science have initiated a joint project, called the Russkiy Mir Foundation. The aim and actions of the Russkiy Mir Foundation are consistent with the greater plan of setting up the Russkiy Mir community. In Russian, the word "Mir" is polysemic, and it can be interpreted as "peace", "world" and "community". The initiatives taken by the Russian Humanitarian cooperation have one vital strategic aim and that is to develop the Russkiy Mir community or Russian speakers' communities. Although the Russkiy Mir Foundation is committed to give knowledge about the customs and tenets of Russia to non-Russians, its core central point is to protect the Russian language by trying to get the attention of Russians living abroad and to develop a feeling of community amongst them, mainly the ones in former Soviet Republics (Motta, 2018). It is working hard to spread the language and culture of Russia and to provide encouragement and assistance to the Russian language study programs. Russiky Mir Foundation gives donations to organizations and people with the intent to promote the translations of Russian authors' writings into foreign languages; provide encouragement and assistance to schools in CIS countries and the Russian language educations in foreign countries and higher education institutions worldwide, support the lessons in the Russian language. By supporting such cultural strategies, the foundation is making every effort to influence the public opinion about Russia by disseminating the facts and information about Russia and the promotion of Russiky Mir's history and philosophy that are the cultural and spiritual fundamentals of Russiky Mir foundation (Klyueva & Mikhaylova, n.d).

4. Discussion and Finding:

4.1. Reasons for Pakistan's Negative Image

At the University of Oxford, a survey was carried out to study the nature and basis of these negative opinions about Pakistan. The question asked at the University of Oxford, from the members of the Foreign Service Programme class of 2016, who were primarily the diplomats from the whole world was "what three things come to mind when you hear about Pakistan?" "Nuclear weapons, terrorism, security, Islam and the Taliban" was mentioned by most of the

respondents. It made the common opinion about the Pakistan seems more probable that it is a "militarized state" which is engaged in "Islamic extremism" (Cheema, 2016).

Pakistan has colossally suffered after becoming the frontline state in the war against terrorism. From 2004 to 2013, Pakistan endured the loss of nearly 80,000 lives, in which the civilian loss of lives is around 50,000, 6,000 security personal sacrificed their lives and 6,000 militants were killed, during the 'war on terror' by the US. However, the West still views Pakistan as a perfidious ally that brazenly supports Islamic radicalism, despite all the sacrifices by Pakistan (Cheema, 2016). There are several reasons for Pakistan's negative perception abroad. The role of violent non-state actors is enormous in this regard, who portrayed Pakistan as an extremist state despite its huge sacrifices on war against terrorism as mentioned above.

Pakistan has been dealing with gigantic evils including an unstable economy, brittle governance, security, and extensive terrorism. However, re-establishing its reliability across the globe is the prime challenge for Pakistan. Political parties in Pakistan have failed to work together for the betterment of Pakistan, despite doing something good for Pakistan; they just safeguard their interests rather than Pakistan's interest. Political parties are confused and practically, have zero internal policy thought; they cannot provide a viable leadership about security and foreign policy problems (Memon *et al.*, 2011). Since 2008, the civilian government has failed to combat the economic and political challenges. Several propaganda tools have been adopted by the other states to tarnish Pakistan's global image, which necessitates Islamabad to employ counter-strategies to cope with this repulsive propaganda. The foreign office of Pakistan is a rigid institution and is devoid of the desired potential. It is a rigid institution and highly dependent upon old school diplomacy, whereas, unable to implement the new means of international influence (public and cultural diplomacy are examples of means of international influence). Cultural diplomacy is one of the most imperative tools in today's world and Pakistan needs to utilize this with the utmost efficiency to accomplish its interest i.e., to have a better and positive international image (Buledi, 2019).

4.2. Pakistan and Cultural Diplomacy

Pakistan has been undergoing a chaotic time economically, politically, and socially and the chief catalyst is its negative perception in the foreign public. Pakistan has commenced initiatives to promote its culture through sports, films, dramas, fruits, and food. The Sufi culture of Pakistan can be another manifestation of soft power. At present, a cultural festival of ideas was organized by Pakistan which has never been organized in the history of the foreign office in New York. The purpose was to elevate the varied cultural facets as well as the arts and literature of Pakistan. As an eminent speaker, Dr. Maleeha Lodhi, a Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, emphasized that cultural exchanges and people-to-people communication are the ways which should be to counter xenophobia (Daily times, 2016). It was a laudable effort by Pakistan's Mission in the UN to fight against various prejudices against Pakistan in certain international groups.

Such programs are part of a wider global campaign initiated by the foreign office, which has instructed major diplomatic stations to ensure effective cultural and public diplomacy in host countries. The mission in Berlin has been very active in the promotion of the culture of Pakistan in addition to communications with the public officers and students from universities (Daily times, 2016). But still, Pakistan has to initiate many more programs like this to gain a positive image internationally.

4.3. Tools which Pakistan Can Use for Promoting Cultural Diplomacy

Pakistan is a country with different ethnic groups inhabiting and working in it. It owns a rich history and attractive geographical locations. One can benefit from such powers and display the country's cultural wealth to spread Pakistan's conspicuous image. Concerning history, as Pakistan is in a susceptible position to India, it has spent profoundly in developing hard or military power and regrettably, it has not successfully used soft power as a policy instrument. Keeping in view the fact that Pakistan has enormous resource potential and to attain soft power, it is suggested that Pakistan should make an effort to make the essential balance between hard and soft power and above all, invest to make its international image better (IPRI, 2016).

4.3.1. Use of Mainstream Media

Positive use of media can substantially project cultural diplomacy. Media mainly monitors in determining and mainly handling the uninterrupted flow of data to people. Due to media tact, it has become feasible for the states to identify and present themselves in a new way in the international commercial centre. The present time is the era of media diplomacy. In the new world order, collective media has a significant part in international relations and they are also called mirrors that reveal countries by displaying the culture of communities and national identity and provide the reasons behind the firmness in the policy of other countries. Thus, it is conceivable to think of group media as a proficient instrument to comprehend the aims of foreign policy and help the national governments to achieve their foreign policy goals. A significant instrument of cultural diplomacy is the government itself (GUMBO, 2017). To promote its culture, Pakistan's government may utilize mainstream media more effectively.

4.3.2. Cultural Exchange Programs

Those students who are part of cultural exchange programs can vigorously claim to have a part in cultural diplomacy. A new semantic approach can be adopted that envisages that students may use soft skills to engage in these activities. The student ambassadors can turn the idea of communications among different cultures into a practice of talks with the people belonging to other cultures. The students can especially use three soft activities such as paying attention to the host country's people, changing the set ideas and opinions about the host country, and speak other languages. Students, living in other foreign countries, can play a role in the promotion of cultural diplomacy and have soft skills by using these actions. They can establish, develop, and sustain relationships with international actors through culture and education that enables them to proactively claim a cultural diplomacy role. The new informal cultural diplomats of the present world are those students who are studying in foreign countries (Akli, 2012). There is a need to organize cultural programs in Pakistan as well that can be attended by the international students and help them transform their perceptions about Pakistan. Pakistani students should participate in other cultural programs as well so that they can visit the other states and represent their country abroad. Government-sponsored and funded abroad scholarships, such as US Fulbright, British Marshall program, and many private foundations, require students to view themselves as cultural ambassadors of their country abroad as students can create a positive perception of their own state in the host state (Akli, 2012).

4.3.3. Sports

In the words of former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela (1994-1999): "Sport has the

power to change the world, the power to inspire, the power to unite people in a way that little else can [...] It is an instrument for peace" (Laureus, 2012). The underlying principle behind exploring sports diplomacy at this point is the comparative increase in the significance of soft power, the power to convince and entice, as the main progress in international relations after the Cold War ended. The most significant and key instrument of soft power is diplomacy. The interest in diplomacy, methods of public diplomacy and the branding of the place have equally increased among the scholars and the people in society. The best way considered, gradually, for the countries, regions, and cities to present their uniqueness, qualities, and "brands" to the whole world is international sporting competitions (Pigman & Rofe, 2013).

The first change took place before the Second World War in 1936, when Adolf Hitler, the German Chancellor, used the Olympics in Berlin for the promotion of his philosophy and supremacy. However, the real and important change took place with the new attitude of the Soviet Union, to gain fame and supremacy in competitions by all efforts needed. Hence during the Cold War, sports became another area of hostility. To build a more harmonious relationship and strengthen the understanding between the West and East, sports were a valuable and great tool. At the beginning of the 1970s, the commonly named "ping pong diplomacy" is considered to be the most important example. The American ping pong players went to Japan for a competition and later, the Chinese delegation invited them for a visit to China. After a year, for several matches in ten cities, the table tennis team of China went to the US which caused a relative breakthrough in relations between the two hostile countries (Semler & Strasser, 2014).

People can develop inter-ethnic involvement and trust in other people by taking various sports initiatives. People tend to believe in others after some sort of effective communication. It can be an entertaining competition or an aid impeccably provided. Others are likely to agree to take one regardless of his or her skin colour, race, or any other unique feature when one is available and accessible and demonstrate respect to others. Even if they have prejudices, in the beginning, studies show that the image change while confronting or cooperating athletes with a different ethnic background is mostly positive. Pakistan should focus on sports especially hockey and cricket. There is a need to have international sports in Pakistan, where international players could come and connect with the people through sports, when the international players will visit Pakistan, they will have first-hand experience and knowledge about the real picture and culture of Pakistan that Pakistan is culturally rich and diverse, which can help change their perceptions of international people of Pakistan.

4.3.4. Promotion of Language

Embassies of Pakistan in different states need to engage in different types of events and functions which could promote the Urdu literature. The language also plays an important role in displaying culture**.** The embassy of Pakistan in Italy had a similar idea when in 2013 in Rome, they held a Pakistani Literature Day. In Rome's attractive Capitolino Museum, a seminar was arranged. Pakistan's literature was discussed there. The books of two Italian writers on Abdul Satter Edhi were also discussed. A tribute was also paid by a Pakistan literature professor to the late Italian expert on Allama Iqbal. Readings were arranged at the Casa Della Letturatura the next day. People belonging to fields of journalism and publication and academics who were interested in Pakistani literature attended both the events and these events presented a new image of Pakistan to the attendees (shah, 2014). So these events must continue to portray the soft image of Pakistan.

4.3.5. Tourism

Culture is the key, foremost, and the most important means of the tourist sector, or in another word, an opportunity for visitors to be able to observe different cultures. It results in the promotion of destinations to the outside world and the experiences of visitors continuously contribute to cultural diplomacy at the international level. Within the international debate on the role of tourism within the construction of peace, one can recognize the alliance of tourism-cultural diplomacy as a path that can bring tourism to an effective contribution to greater intercultural dialogue and global mutual understanding (Carbone, 2017). Pakistan is a state which is blessed with tremendous sceneries and beautiful tourists' spots, so Pakistan must and have to use tourism as a cultural diplomacy tool more effectively.

4.3.6. Social Media

Using social media for cultural diplomacy is a fresh start. Social media is influencing the way billions of people communicate with one other and sequentially, it affects the way the communication is executed between the industries and the customer and between the citizens and the authorities. It is essential to determine the suitable digital channels for the foreign ministry. To set aims and guidelines, a clear vision is essential (Charlton, 2012). Pakistani government needs to have such type of platforms on the social media where Government sponsor people just have the administratorship and where they can keep an eye on every activity by the social media users. These platforms must be used to interact with the people of other states and they could do a positive discussion which could lead to change the perceptions of the people regarding a particular topic. Recently the Government of Pakistan under Prime Minister Imran Khan is using social media effectively. But still, there is a need to use this tool for conflict management and resolution also.

4.3.7. Cinema

Popular culture and art contribute significantly to the way the "outside world" perceives a country, nation, or problem. The vibrant cinematographic scene of today's world inspires people globally despite political differences. Hence, an important and distinctive medium can be a film. It can be accessed effortlessly and those people, who are not in touch with other kinds of art, watch films. That is the reason it has access to a large number of audience and even those audiences who do not have much language abilities. The film creates a feeling of closeness. The film can produce the delusion of life and reality; provide new and unfamiliar perceptions about the world. These are the reasons a film can be considered to be a real description of life particularly films of cultures and places of other people. It can present the human rights abuses and suppressions by telling a story in a manner that makes other people understand and can generate sympathy and ruminate about the requisite justice. It connects the people and builds a platform for people on each side of the lens. It makes the audience stronger by giving them the awareness that personal commitment can bring a change. Frequently, those issues are depicted in films that the other traditional mediums cannot describe (Thussu, 2016).

New social topics and problems which a State possesses can be presented and a social discussion can begin which may result in transformation. Films can promote the development of civil societies, collaboration, and understanding, working as a flexible, globally established way of reconciliation even between those countries that have a tense diplomatic relationship or no relationship at all. Pakistan can also use its cinema effectively by raising certain issues

internationally. Other than that, Pakistani movies needs to show at an international level to mould foreign public perception and make them think that Pakistan is also a peace-loving nation. This way the Urdu language could also widely spread. There is a need to have English subtitles in every Pakistani movie so that it can target the international audience easily.

4.3.8. Pakistan Study Centres in Other State Universities

There is a need to have Pakistani centres in major international universities, where the youth of that university can get involved in different cultural activities. Many Chinese study centres are functioning in various universities of Pakistan, likewise, other states have it too, so Pakistan must follow the footsteps of other nations in this regard.

5. Conclusion

Hard power has usually been one of the fundamental means of projecting foreign policy across the globe. Though due to some reasons such as the process of globalization, the information revolution, and after the culmination of the Cold War, the term "soft power" began to become popular because it manifests non-violent use of power. According to Nye, soft power is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment", and culture, tenets, and foreign policies are part of it. It has been used as a tool of foreign policy by several countries, they had different aims, and as required by the national priorities and historical phases. Cultural diplomacy certainly originated as the actions taken by the government to promote a positive image of a country and its core mission. The purpose is to form certain alliances between states and create an impact through culture and presenting its existence by internationalizing its cultural life. To solve the grave ideological disputes, cultural diplomacy can work if use effectively. In strengthening the relationship between countries and present-day negotiations, cultural diplomacy is turning out to be an efficient instrument. 9/11 has led to an image problem for Pakistan even though Pakistan has often contributed positively. To a certain extent, the reason is that not much attention has been paid to build soft power and the country's image. Pakistan has not been successful in attracting the attention of the world despite having a great historical and cultural heritage. Soft power is an important way through which Pakistan can respond to the negative narratives about it.

The cultures of Pakistan are tremendously diverse and attractive. Pakistan's softer image can be represented by displaying the cultural diversity of Pakistan on media. Rich and one of the most ancient civilizations of the world such as Gandhara and Indus valley (Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa) have been discovered in Pakistan. Islam and Buddhism are practiced here and it provided an entryway to these important religions. It offers profuse tourism attractions which include, in the north, the powerful Karakoram and in the south, the huge sedimentary delta of Indus River. There are several peaks above 7,000 meters, in Pakistan. Pakistan is blessed to have diverse flora and fauna. Mighty Himalayas, Karakoram, and the Hindukush range with their alpine meadows and permanent snow line, coniferous forests down the sub-mountain scrub, the vast Indus plain merging into the great desert, the coastline, and wetlands. Law and order situation must be made better to fully benefit from the tourism sector. Pakistan has been marvellous in sports such as cricket, hockey, squash, and snooker. The think tank culture in Pakistan is booming and can have contacts with their equivalents at the international level. The media of Pakistan is energetic and the civil society is progressing. Pakistani diaspora is spread all over the world (Chandio, 2016). So, this is the need of the time that Pakistan has to use

cultural diplomacy otherwise Pakistan will have to face the consequences due to its negative image internationally.

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