

## **A NEW TOOL FOR GEOPOLITICS: SOFT POWER PURSUANCE OF GREAT POWERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study is to find how states are pursuing soft power as a new tool to exert geopolitical influence. Present and emerging powers selected for this comparative analysis form the most ambitious group of states pursuing an aggressive agenda of soft power influence. The three specific reasons for the selection of four countries and a region/regional organization are; 1) these states frequently appear high in the global soft power rankings 2) have strong global political presence and 3) each of these states have global political agenda to pursue geopolitical influence. As the world is transiting to more softer tools for pursuing their geopolitical influence, it is paramount to assess their intentions to pursue a global political agenda through soft power. The core question which study aims to answer entails, what is the strength of their soft power and what are the means to strengthen it further. It also focuses on presenting a comparative analysis of their soft power assets. USA is a sole superpower and has a sound soft power image while China is aggressively pursuing policy to develop its soft power and share this position soon. Russia has been a superpower in the recent past but not very successful on this front. India has a good track record as a strong proponent of nonaligned movement and due to its cultural diversity but its soft power intentions are adversely affected by its internal politics and mistreatment of minorities. European Union has the most powerful and sustained soft power image and may rightly be called a soft power superpower. This comparative analysis concludes that soft power will be one of the very important and central weapon for the powerful states of the world to pursue and exert their pressure and maneuver the world nations for their global ambitions.

**KEY WORDS:** Soft power, geopolitical influence, great powers, comparative analysis, diplomatic

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Historically, states have been pursuing their interests and pressurizing other political entities through various means and material tools. From direct subjugations and military interventions to secretive interference and political maneuvering and destabilizing through corruptive practices, geopolitics mostly deals with hard power and the coercive means of changing political realities. Soft power applies attraction and various means of persuasion to win (Nye Jr., 2009) the nations or modern political states and entities. This is also quite different from geo-economics where financial

assistance and economic support are the only means of influencing. The political world has been continuously transiting from harsher to softer means of political influence. From the World Wars to formation of alliances, and from establishment of security and political organizations to lobbying and propaganda, it has experienced more rapid transformation in the last century.

Since the 1990s, when Joseph Nye put forward the idea of soft power, this has become a buzzword in global politics and a huge literature is being created in this area of study. The use of Soft power as a tool to pursue and attract nations into a specific political philosophy or alliance is a fact. Hence, it will be impossible to do justice to any study on future political practices as well as emerging political poles or blocks without a reference to this newer element of global power play. Last century has seen an ideological aspect to global politics as was the case of communism versus capitalism. In the absence of such distinct and powerful ideological divide, soft power is being pursued as a tool and means along the lines of how states are acting and reacting internally and within their sphere of influence. These practices are forming ideological images of the states and are being studied and projected as Soft Power or contrasting concept of 'failed/fragile states' or 'rogue states' (Henriksen, 2001).

## **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The topic demands an extensive survey of the body of contemporary knowledge being created on the subject in the light of fast paced political developments in geo politics. For this purpose, the study will be based on exploratory (Stebbins, 2001) research. Exploratory research is wedded to the notion of exploration and "the researcher as explorer" (Jupp, 2006, p. 109). However, it differs from the many other research types and notions on the ground that no set formula and rules are to be followed. "Those engaged in exploratory research are concerned with the development of theory from data in a process of continuous discovery" (p. 110). Exploratory research is ideal in the environment of uncertain and unclear issues and problems. The research helps in finding and forming the problem rather than finding solutions and defining the problem. It also invites and extends details and description into a sound understanding and deeper insight of the problem. Such a study could not come to a conclusive result or give set outcome. However, a thoughtful review and insight of the past trends and experiences as well as a comparative look at identical scenarios lead to refining and issue and reduces the fear of uncertain outputs.

## **3. Review of Great Powers use of Soft Powers**

For the purpose of this research four countries and a region or regional organization have been selected to assess their intentions to pursue a global political agenda through soft power. The core question which study aims to

answer what is the strength of their soft power and what are the means to strengthen it further. In the context of present and emerging global powers, it also focuses on presenting a comparative analysis of their soft power assets. Ranging from their role in international organizations to the approach towards international disputes and issues, stemming from an inherent need for pursuing the national influence or consequential formation of hegemonic intentions, this aspect of the study will also help understand the nature of future political entanglements among states. USA is the current superpower and China is an emerging global power. Russia has been a contestant superpower with USA while India has the potential to emerge as a leading power in the near future. All these countries appear in the soft power rankings. European Union (EU) is selected due to the long list of EU members appearing on the top of the lists for the soft power rankings. Secondly, EU pursues a collective agenda when it comes to matters falling under soft power domain like issues of human rights and environment or support for sustainable development and resolution of regional and global issues and conflicts. According to the recent World Soft Power rankings, 10 out of the top 15 countries are the EU member states.

**Table 1: Soft Power Rankings (World and Asia) 2019**

World Rankings		Asian Rankings	
Rank	Country	Rank	Country
1	France	1	Japan
2	UK	2	South Korea
3	Germany	3	Singapore
4	Sweden	4	China
5	USA	5	Taiwan
6	Switzerland	6	Thailand
7	Canada	7	Malaysia
8	Japan	8	India
9	Australia	9	Indonesia
10	Netherlands	10	Philippines
11	Italy		
12	Norway		
13	Spain		
14	Denmark		
15	Finland		

**Source: The Soft Power 30: A global ranking of the soft power 2019**

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. American Dream**

The US has enjoyed the status of Diplomatic Super Power. No other state has a stronger, widespread and popular diplomacy network in the world than the US. US won the world support against USSR through its diplomacy,

popular culture and propaganda wars, or collectively soft power. The United States has been using this soft power (Nye Jr., 2009) for a long time and is pronounced in the art of changing global as well as the local or contextual mindset of the audiences against a certain country or regime. The extent of the US use of soft power range from facing a global opponent as in the case of the former USSR during the cold war or pressing governments across the world to alienate a potential threat to the US or deviant as in the case of Cuba in the past and North Korea at the present.

For almost 50 years, United States has been the only country with the most embassies, diplomatic missions, and consulates in the world and it was in 2019 it ranked second after china with the difference of only one extra diplomatic mission of china (Global Diplomacy Index , 2020). This is still the first among the OECD nations in terms of its diplomatic spread across the world. However, the USA is far ahead of China in terms of its diplomatic history and the impact of its diplomacy on a global scale. The powerful diplomacy of the US has won friends, allies, and rivals both but comparatively US diplomacy is a powerful tool to settle its matters in its way (Hampson & Zartman, 2016).

This long-standing engagement with the world nations and global reach provides the US with a unique opportunity to deploy soft power. The USA had provided financial assistance or aid of one kind or the other to almost every country of the world in the past years. This trend peaked in the last decade to reach 227 countries or territories while in the year 2018, the US committed US\$47 billion in aid to 212 countries regions (USAID, 2019). Pakistan has enjoyed the status of one of the highest US aid recipients since its inception. In 2010, the US provided US\$ 2.7 billion to the Pakistan government, the highest ever in assistance to the country.

In 2018, Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Afghanistan were the top four recipients of the US foreign aid and assistance. Though all four are from the Asian continent, yet the countries in the African continent receives the attention. Almost all the countries in the continent received some in US foreign aid assistance except three (Foreign Assistance , 2019). US financial aid is weighed differently within the US as well as across the world. However, it is certainly a strong tool for successful diplomacy as well as Soft Power influence. Microsoft owner Bill Gates commented that this aid "boosted U.S. popularity" (McBride, 2018).

Recognizing the importance of this financial aid and assistance to the wider global community and its importance for maintaining US global influence and leadership, Mr. Stewart M. Patrick, a prolific writer at Council for

Foreign Relations and Director of International Institutions and Global Governance Programme argues that any changes especially a drop in the amount of aid “would signal the definitive surrender of any pretense to U.S. global leadership” (Patrick, 2019). Barnette (2005) believes that it will be political, security, cultural, and economic factors that will shape the new age of globalization requiring an active American role.

The US has made it part of its global role to support fundamental human rights, democracy and freedom movements and struggles. It has championed as a defender and promoter of democracy attracting populations wretched by the authoritarian rules. US political values and ideas like protection of human rights, support for democracy and rule of law, and promotion of universal values form the core of the US soft power image. These have been an integral part of its role in global politics and society. The US has been supporting social movements, individuals, organizations, institutions, and governments across the world, and in response, these individuals and governments have become US lobby and support groups to achieve its ultimate political motives.

The US image of a “Melting Pot” (Montalvo-Barbot, 2019) also wins it a lot of popularity across the world with young populations who aspire to migrate to a land of their ultimate dreams and wish to find a place for achieving their life ideals. The United States instills in all immigrants a passion and an urge to become American no matter what background they come from and this "becoming American" (Jacoby, 2009) has positively evolved. US media and entertainment industry has been a great source of dissemination of its culture and lifestyle which inspires people around the globe.

The diversity and respect for all ethnicities, multiculturalism, and interculturalism, opportunities to pursue personal, religious, and commercial objectives freely win it more attraction across the world. From 'Hot Dogs' to 'Pop Music' and from 'Hollywood' to 'Technology Parks', from geographical landmarks to engineering marvels, US soft power image is integrated into every aspect of life. Michael Jackson remained an icon of American Pop Music and an ideal for millions of global musical audiences.

#### **4.2. Chinese Charm Offensive**

Shambaugh (2013) highlighted that “Chinese grasp the idea that power is comprehensive and integrative, not atomistic .... China’s contemporary effort to regain its status as a global power has consciously included multiple dimensions” (p. 6). China's extensive focus on the Soft Power pursuance is much reflected from the policies of President Xi Jinping. The same year in 2013, Xi vigorously promoted a set of Chinese national values, ethics,

lifestyle and aspirations combined as 'China Dream' (Shuhfan & Chih-shian, 2015). It picked up pace as an inspirational slogan (BBC News China, 2013) though not equivalent to the power and charisma of the 'American Dream' which has lived for centuries.

Mingjiang Li (2011) the editor of the book *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics* mentions that "In China, soft power has become one of the most frequently used phrases among political leaders, leading academics and journalists." He further enumerates that "...the most significant achievement for china on the soft power has been the ability to forestall the formation of a containment policy among other major powers" (p.9). China's soft power policy helped china in multiple ways. It has not only reversed the "China Threat" (Gertz, 2013) to a considerable extent for other states but also formed a positive image of China across the world. Extensive literature has been produced about China's Soft Power (Lai & Lu, 2012) within and outside China owing to its growing importance and influence worldwide.

The influence and extent of soft power elevate it to be a central element of public diplomacy. Chinese public diplomacy was not much of success due to its cultural disconnect with most of the world (d'Hooghe, 2014) particularly the western world. Importantly, China has addressed this area well by increasing the number of its diplomatic presence. Chinese entry to the diplomatic arena for winning over support in the world is not new but is being pursued with new enthusiasm and force. The USA enjoyed the status of Diplomatic Super Power for a long time and possessed a stronger, well spread, and popular diplomacy network in the world which helped the US win world support against USSR. However, China has invaded the US supremacy in this field and in 2019 possessed most embassies, diplomatic missions and consulates in the world (Global Diplomacy Index , 2020). Chinese diplomacy has been long overshadowed by the Communist Parts core agenda and views it held of traditional Chinese Society. In the post-1979, reform periods it has greatly changed with changing party views on international and national issues becoming less rigid and more inclusive and open (Yang, 2014).

The widespread economic activities, investment portfolios, and infrastructural projects had provided China with newer opportunities to relate to the world populations and governments. Though investment and loans are much debated as a means of soft or hard power, financial assistance does contribute to the positive image of a country especially when it is huge and on softer conditions. Relating the two, Kurlantzick (2006) at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace describes that

“...China and its neighbors enunciate a broader idea of soft power, the idea that soft power implies all elements outside of the security realm, including investment and aid.” Chinese financial assistance overlay stands at highest ever in its history and one of the highest in the world. China provides financial assistance to more than 150 countries while other types of assistance extended to the almost entire world.

In 2018, China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) was set up to reform its financial aid mechanism and provide standards for international financial support activities (CIDCA, 2020). Chinese assistance has been varied ranging from typical financial support programmes such as interest-free loans, concessional loans, grants, debt relief, budget support, to assist in other areas like medical and technical assistance, education scholarship and training support, and humanitarian aid. All this has contributed to the soft image of the country and influenced the regional as well as global public opinion in favour of the communist nation. It is very aptly stated by Arif (2017) that “Chinese influence has increased in Asia over the last few decades through developing economic trades, providing aids to Asian countries and creating regional organizations.” While Saeed Ullah (2015) points out that Chinese soft power has helped the country to “change the world perception” about it.

China has predominantly used media of all kinds to project its soft power image. Two typical examples are China Radio International (CRI) and China Global Television Network (CGTN) and both air programmes throughout the world. Both state-owned entities with many others are working to enhance Chinese soft image through the multilingual programmes broadcasted in all major and numerous regional and national languages. Only CRI covers more than 3000 hours of programming in almost 70 languages (CRI, 2020) and reaches every part of the world through local AM and FM repeated broadcasts. It also claims to "promote favourable relations between the People's Republic of China and the world" as well as 'soft power policy'. Both media conglomerates are considered part of Chinese efforts to open up to the outer world and attract the public and governments alike. CGTN has six channels that are "available in more than 170 countries and regions worldwide" (CGTN, 2020). Part of its mission statement is to “focus on nations, regions, and stories that are often underreported by other international media.” Chinese media and CGTN is also considered a propaganda tool and often criticized by western media and governments.

Other than media, China is also pursuing its soft power image through diversified means including the promotion of the Chinese language, setting up Confucius Centers around the world, promotion of Chinese culture and

traditions through hosting and organizing event across the world, marketing Chinese popular culture and giving huge subsidies and support to the entertainment industry to compete with international media and promote unique Chinese values and norms, internationalized film industry, hosting Olympics as well as many other global sports events. Chinese cuisine is already popular across the world and the magnanimous food festival and Expo's to market Chinese handicraft and cottage industry are common. Lincoln Memorial University's McCann (2011) proposes "that China could become the dominant economic power within a few years if it exploits the competitive advantages it is creating politically, culturally, legally and economically." Chinese motives are very well explained by Kurlantzick (2006) in the following lines:

*Over the past decade, China has downplayed its hard power in Southeast Asia, instead of creating a strategy to build its soft power. For the first time in post-WWII history, the United States may be facing a situation in which another country's appeal outstrips its own in an important region, a change sure to shock the United States. Before China's appeal spreads to other parts of the developing world, U.S. policy makers need to understand how China exerts soft power, if China's soft power could be dangerous to developing nations, and whether elements of China's charm could threaten U.S. interests. (p. 2)*

### **4.3. The Illusion of Indian Soft Power Pursuance**

India has been long portraying itself as the biggest democracy and finds it a wow point. As the biggest democracy, it has a wow to provide support for other democracies. It has assumed the responsibility to lift other nations (Raina, 2006). Similarly, Indian secular character has been winning the country lots of respect internationally. However, Indian support to the freedom movements around the world looks like a fallacy when the country has not recognized the Kashmiris right of self-determination and there are numerous other movements and struggles of greater autonomy and indigenous separatist movements in India itself (Sehgal & Robotka , 2019). Being a birthplace for many religions especially one of the oldest Hinduism to one of the newest Sikhism, India also germinated Buddhism and Jainism. The rich Indian culture and religious assimilation provided India with a unique ability to promote its own culture and accept that of others openly. Hence, India became home to many other religions that were not indigenous but found solid grounds for survival in the region namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Over the millennia, with a rich civilization impact, India has impacted far and wide realms and was heavily influenced



(Sagar, 1992) by other cultures and civilizations through continuous invasions and foreign intruders.

With the assimilation of so many religions, old and new, and amalgamation of various cultures, thriving and receding India has formed a world level recognition of an ideological, mystical and imaginative culture of its own. In recent years, especially in the last couple of decades, India has been making a conscious and aggressive effort to promote this set of cultural values and ideas of co-existence to the world. Though the idea of operating in a diverse and at times clashing ideological and opposite cultural and spiritual environment peacefully, dates back to the Buddha's' times but Gandhi revolutionized the principle of 'Ahimsa' meaning nonviolence rather globalized it. "...its biggest ideological export, India's spiritual, artistic, and cultural impact makes its soft power global" (Thussu, 2013).

It is convenient for India to pursue the soft power image globally with an image already established and with a philosophy refined over the centuries (Heng, 2016) and backed through the strong political will of the founding father of the Indian nation. Another landmark achievement on India's record has been its role during the cold war years. During the Cold War period, when the entire world was divided into the capitalist and communist blocks and state survival was dependent on siding with one or the other, India was one of the key contributors to the idea of non-alignment. Nehru, the then Indian prime minister, championed as one of the three pioneers of the Non-Aligned Movement to win rapid global support. Though the cold war ended in 1989 the NAM sustained and has become the second-largest group of nations after the UN. India played an active leadership role to achieve NAM objectives (Jayapalan, 2001, p. 102), and its contributions secured the country a credible status and expansion of diplomatic relations with the wider world.

Diverse Indian culture, historical buildings and monuments, Indian Movies vis-à-vis Bollywood cinema industry, and its rich cuisine has lots of attraction for people around the world. Taj Mahal is the most visited tourist destination in India and one of the most visited tourist destinations in Asia and the world. Indian Cinema and entertainment industry has popularized Indian artists and actors across continents. However, Indian news media needs to mature and has to do a lot of effort to come at par with international media practices. Unlike China, India media has not achieved that scale and scope of projecting its soft image. While portraying a soft image requires more transparent and independent reporting but Indian news media seems to be following the policy of propaganda. South Indian cuisine with diverse sauces and spices is making way to every cosmopolitan

city of the world. Indian yoga now stands equal to most standard physical exercises with emotional and spiritual benefits and is becoming popular in the western world.

The influence and extent of soft power have not elevated India rather projected its inherent weakness and flaws to improve. Though the soft power helps to change a country's perception, India is failing in this regard due to multiple issues. First, it is believed, India is not in a position to benefit from its soft power image as is the case with the USA or China. "*India* uses her *soft* power capacities mainly for *image* building rather than as an instrument to exert influence" (Wagner, 2010). Second, today India represents a perfect description of two extremes 'Feminine India' to 'Savage India' as enumerated by John Hymans (Kugiel, 2017). For an easy interpretation, Patryk Kugiel explains the two extremes as 'soft and tempting' to 'violent and irrational' India (p.167). Despite all the efforts, India is making to build a soft image, its human rights record, communal violence and atrocities against minorities, the recent passing of extremely controversial and discriminatory laws, and continuous subjugation of Jammu and Kashmir are glaring examples of its crude political philosophy at least under the present government of Bharatiya Janata Party.

Shashi Tharoor, an acclaimed Indian writer, diplomat and politician wrote in his 2011 book, "India's civilizational ethos has been an immeasurable asset for our country" (Tharoor, 2011, p. 59). However, forced by the recent developments in India, he has to confess that "This is not about propaganda; indeed, it will not work if it is directed from above, least of all by the government. But conversely, government actions can undermine the story. Indeed, troubling internal disruptions have begun to tarnish this global perception of India" (Tharoor:, 2018). He went to the extent to mention that India's slogan of 'Make in India' is turning to sound like 'Hate in India' to the western world and societies. It is because of repeated news in international media about growing Hindutva under the present government and violence and discrimination in India.

#### **4.4. Russian Soft Power Challenges**

One of the major differences between the US and the USSR during the cold war years was the strength of US propaganda and the weakness of Soviet soft power play and strategies. This could also be considered one important contributor in the fall of the Soviet empire. Though both remained superpowers in terms of military might and political confrontation US was far superior to the USSR as a Diplomatic Super Power. Unlike its predecessor, Russia has made concrete efforts to erect institutions, design

policies, and create avenues of improving and exerting its soft power image as part of its foreign policy (Sergunin & Karabeshkin, 2015).

As per the Lowy Institute Global Diplomacy Index, Russian Federation ranks fifth largest after China, US, Japan, and France with a widespread network of embassies, diplomatic missions and consulates in the world (Global Diplomacy Index, 2020). With this huge network of global diplomatic outreach, Russia doesn't find very favourable sentiments even in its close neighbourhood. With a long history of hard power use and recent harsher action in Ukraine, Russian initiatives and plans to pursue soft power look dubious to many.

Russia has also diversified its efforts and tried to be a player in the race to win the world through soft power. Bauer (2016) has enumerated the Russian efforts in the following lines: To a certain extent, Russia has also sought to further expand its ideology and influence outside of its borders through the use of soft power. Examples of these efforts include organizations like the Russian World Foundation and Rossotrudnichestvo, which promote Russian language and culture abroad, and media efforts like Russia Today (RT), which according to the website, broadcasts in over 100 countries. But over the past few years, the discussion of soft power has notably increased.

The factors to the low level and not so productive results of these steps remain mostly similar to the earlier ones. As some of these are natural which could be further categorized as Russian internal structures and perceptions of the world about it while others are attributed to the multiplicity of factors again most of it is contributed by the massive American and western propaganda about the Soviet Union which still haunts the Russian efforts.

Russia still fails to propagate and universalize its culture and the greatest limitation to this aspect is a common language for foreign populations. Soviets literature or the present-day Russian writers and thinkers have produced some of the world-class literary works and many of them were able to find a place in the shelves overseas but the pace has remained very slow. On a similar note, the Russian language could be considered a great resource to develop 'transnational connections' bring harmony to a vast and scattered society and unify the 'Russian World' (Mustajoki, Protasova, & Yelene, 2019) during and after the fall of USSR but contrary to its powerful role and effect in the host country and soviet territories, it has made a negligible impact overseas. Russian society even today remains mostly closed entity for the most outside world especially when compared with the US or the West. According to The Soft Power 30, a global ranking of the soft

power in 2019, Russia ranked last in a list of thirty global nations. Russia could not even rank in the Asia soft power list of ten Asian nations where china secured the fourth position while India was ranked at the eighth spot.

#### **4.5. European Union: Soft Power Superpower**

European nations and Union both can be credited for pursuing and supporting an ambitious policy of engaging the public in the process of making policies. The process focus largely remains national and local level policy-making through civil society engagement but the public input is an integral element of the regional policy-making under the EU. It is seen even to a global extent especially the debate and discussion process under the European Parliament on issues of global political and security concerns. Whether or not enveloped in the European human rights, democracy, and peaceful living and mutual coexistence framework, the increased participation is attributed to the EU enhanced interaction with international organizations, institutions, and non-state entities and groups (Marchetti, 2016) on other areas trade and development and security and environment.

In his article, *The European Union's Social Power in International Politics*, Peter Van Ham has developed an insightful discussion on the EU's practices of innovative public diplomacy and its capacity to experiment newer model of not only of its 'Social Power' (Ham, 2013) but on a larger scale "the EU puts itself forward as a model of regional governance that may be an inspiration for the global governance" (p.158). He believes that the EU has a lot of achievements in its credit within this domain which have helped to further elevate its aspirations for trying novel ideas. From 'Green Superpower' to Great 'Social Power' (as per author's note, it is different than Soft Power clearly for creating standards, norms, and values as compared to apply components of attraction and persuasion), EU is experimenting and offering much more to the world to look up to this body for future political, economic and social arrangements and rearrangements.

The EU itself is reminiscent of a soft image with a giant mix of opposing and at times divergent political views and socio-cultural practices in a harmonious, free and independent environment. EU nations' friendliness and values are not only centered on its members. It has been propagating and even to a reasonable coercing in the name of mandatory requirements or criteria for interaction and dealings with other nations, institutions, organizations and business entities. EU by its past political influence, imperial outreach and present economic, environmental and human rights agendas interact with the almost entire world. Global Diplomacy Index, prepared by Lowy Institute shows that members of the European Union

have a widespread network of embassies, diplomatic missions, and consulates in the world and it connects the EU in one way or the other to all these nations (Global Diplomacy Index , 2020).

According to a global ranking of soft power in 2019, The Soft Power 30, the first four positions are held by EU members while overall ten out of the top fifteen nations scoring highest in the global soft power index come from the EU. France tops the list and country is rich with its culture, art and tourist spots, cuisine, and much more to offer to the outer world as part of its soft power image. French is a popular language for learning ranked fourth in a global context. Next on the list, the UK offers a great variety of attractions to the people around the globe. From the centuries of English domination, UK is followed in so many different domains from clothing to cuisine, from educational policy to practices and for rich heritage and literature. With a strong number of 28 nations, the EU looks a union of diversity attracting people for its democratic values, higher ethical standards in governance, higher living standards, unmatched educational excellence and facilities, respect for human rights, acceptance and resilience with all the diversity of culture and societies.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The study of the soft power pursuance of the four countries namely USA, China, India, Russia and an organization, European Union brings us to the conclusion that soft power is likely to become instrumental for the way states win their interests and influence the other states and organizations in the future. This will not only be a tool for securing their national interests but provides the means to enhance their political influence and enlarge their sphere of influence. In each of the five cases, it can be seen with clarity that pursuance of the soft power remains one of the important pillar of their diplomatic interactivity. USA enjoys a historic edge over other but China is fast taking over the US position through its aggressive and focused soft power pursuance. Indian efforts are getting momentum but Russian failure to do better in this domain comes out of factors natural to its aloofness and alienation from the world culture. In this area again China has been much more successful. With a similarity to the Russian closed culture and aloofness, China has made phenomenal strides to improve and open up itself.

While each one of these countries are pursuing the soft power as a tool to influence the other countries and world at large, EU stands distinct and ahead of all. It can be rightly regarded as the soft power superpower. It has the highest number of its member states toping the world rankings on soft power trends and studies. For the last many years, this is one of the European Union members which tops the list. To summarize our argument

around the importance and effectiveness of the soft power, it can be said that soft power will be one of the very important and central weapon for the powerful states of the world to pursue and exert their pressure and politically maneuver the world nations for the national interests and global ambitions.

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