



SOFT POWER OF EMERGING POWERS (CASE STUDY OF INDONESIA)

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ABSTRACT

Power has always been a key concept in international relations and it plays a pivotal role in determining the nature and scope of international relations. The concept of power is defined and identified from different perspectives. During the 1990's, American scholar Joseph Jr identified two major forms of power namely, hard power and soft power. While hard power is identified with force or coerce, soft power deals with attraction. Over the last few decades, soft power has gained greater prominence in international relations. Today, almost all the countries in the world, irrespective of how strong they are within the international system, gives greater priority to soft power in the foreign policy formulation and in this regard, Indonesia is no exception. Given its geographical and population size and economic capacity, Indonesia has been widely regarded as one of the emerging powers in the world, projected to be among the top ten economies in the coming years. Against this backdrop, objective of this study includes, the identification of main soft power tools possessed by Indonesia and to critically evaluate how successful Indonesia has been in projecting these soft power tools at the world stage to attain its national interests. This is a qualitative case study research based on both primary and secondary data. With regard to timeframe of the study, special focus is made on Indonesia under the current president Joko Widodo. Under the current President, greater prominence has been given to country's soft power potentials. The results of the study reflect key aspects of Indonesia's soft power capabilities. First, as an emerging powerhouse it possesses an ample of soft power potentials in the form of resilient economy, tourism, profound history and culture, foreign policy and democracy etc. Next, out of these soft power potentials, Indonesia tends to focus more on economic and financial elements such as international trade, investments and tourism and rightly so the country has able to achieve great success in terms of its economic capabilities. The study also finds the existence of a significant gap between Indonesia's soft power potentials and their realization. In other words, Indonesia has been underperforming in some of major soft power elements. Thus, the study calls for a better interconnected mechanism to exhibit country's soft power potentials at the regional and international level.

KEYWORDS: *Soft power, Indonesia, Emerging power, Democracy, Trade*