

# USE OF SOFT POWER BY INDIA AS A STRATEGIC WEAPON: MEDIA'S MANIPULATION

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## Abstract

*With the emergence of new challenges the traditional approaches have now been taken over by the non-traditional ones. Either it is the hard power or soft power every state mobilize it to achieve the strategic ends. This paper focuses on India's soft power capabilities and its extensive use, particularly that of mass media for projecting country's image as the world's largest successful democracy and vocals of world peace. However, the employment of this strategic tool by India is not restricted to its image building but it is geared more on tarnishing the image of other countries particularly Pakistan. The paper further examines Indian media manipulation through 'Liberal' lens, which is based on liberals view of 'free media' and 'freedom-of-speech' identify Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's anti-Pakistan and Hindu nationalism agenda along with their negative framing of news contents targeting Pakistan. The key findings substantiate that India use propaganda strategy against Pakistan, utilizing Sun Tzu and Kautilya's deception and isolation concept in their foreign policy towards Pakistan. It verifies that comparing all previous governments, Modi 'sarkar' has extensively mobilized media as soft power for achieving its strategic objectives. Indian new strategy of using soft power is not effective and conducive for regional peace at the moment rather it has proved to be supplementing its already existing hard Power rhetoric for its gluttony of regional supremacy. The Bharatya Janata Party's (BJP) government seems to be adapting 'Liberal' approach, however, in practical terms the essence of 'Realist' sentiments are deeply engraved that would not be easy to rooted out. The paper concludes that BJP's xenophobic rhetoric is pro-Hindu nationalism and anti-Pakistan. It uses media and other concepts of strategic philosophies as the soft power and employs it as a strategic weapon for attaining regional hegemony.*

**Keywords:** Soft Power, Freedom of Speech, Liberal Theory, Sun Tzu, Kautilya, Surgical Strikes.

## Introduction

**P**akistan is on a bumpy ride with India since its inception. The historical birth of Pakistan witnessed a series of violent confrontation and riots owing to the struggle made for the acquisition of princely states on the basis of partition formula.

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Not long after the partition of Indian sub-continent when the founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah died due to health conditions in 1948. It is more or less the same time when tension amongst the two-escalated due to Kashmir issue during which Indian forces invaded Kashmir by landing military in the area and occupied the territory. Incidentally, this was the time when Pakistani authorities were preparing to take control of the Kashmir region, however situation turned the other way around.

A review of the historical timeline of events occurred between these two neighboring states, reveals nothing constructive happened in general. It is interesting to note that not only several generations witnessing the uneven bilateral relations between India and Pakistan but also in Indian occupied Kashmir (IOK) where generations were born and are living in war situation and even die fighting for the freedom which is their fundamental right. Indeed, United Nations is vocal on humanitarian injustices, however, the atrocities being carried out in IOK by Indian security forces do not figure significantly among the UN campaigns. The approval of UN resolution on the 'Right of self-determination' seems long gone and appears to be out from international human rights agenda table. The two wars fought between the two counties in 1965, 1971 and 1999 Kargil conflict have failed to side any of the rivals in terms of peace and security. However the wars have dismembered East Pakistan from the West Pakistan due to continuous political voracity and conspiracies hatched by India that escalated extremism amongst nations.

Any conducive efforts initiated by either side to improve bilateral relations remain controversial, particularly since 2015 until present smoothing of the relationship remained a far cry. After the Army Public School (APS), Peshawar carnage in December 2014, the blame game continued. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government has made substantial efforts in normalizing the relations between the two nations however nothing productive emerged. Events like Kulbushan Yadav's arrest (March 2016) and when he was allowed to meet the family (December 2017), killing of Burhan Wani (July 2016), Uri attack, the allegedly claimed surgical strike by India (September 2016) and Indian army base attack in Nagrota (November 2016) have only added fuel to the fire. The situation between the arch rival nuclear neighbors kept escalating despite both confronted with similar issues of terrorism, poverty, corruption, education and health sector.

With the passing time the Indo-Pakistan bilateral situation remain stagnant while increased skirmishes and firing incidents at the Line of Control (LoC) and Working Boundary (WB) continues to multiply civilians and border security forces casualties.

So far, in 2017 approximately over 120 LoC and WB border violations have been witnessed as reported by various international organizations. Various governments have come and ruled India but have always prioritized other issues rather than improving relations with Pakistan. Since Modi has taken premier's office 2014 the voice of "Soft Power", "Neighbors First", "Peaceful South Asia region" and "Progressive and Shining India" are echoing in India. On each forum Modi speaks of stabilizing Afghanistan and supportive of 'stable Pakistan' however all this good will kept staying on papers and nothing conducive has emerged.

During past few years the concept of 'Soft Power' has reiterated prominently in Indian parliament, however, recent events suggests that Modi is using Soft Power initiative for his personnel gains. India has influenced extensively the South Asian states in terms of cultural and political values and impact their foreign policy strategies, however what does not seems to have unaltered is its dubious intensions towards Pakistan. When India talks of peace and interdependence within South Asian region, when it promotes its cultural and political value and while seeing the changing foreign policy strategy and its emphasizes on the 'Soft Power' approach, various questions emerges such as: a) does India use its film industry or media to extend its cultural and political influence? b) Using soft power concept how much capability does India has to manipulate media c) Is India using propaganda strategy towards Pakistan in an effort to demand and isolate it? d) How Modi's government is co-opting with Hindutva legacy and satisfying it. What is India's agenda and the rhetoric? e) How theories and strategies are affecting Indo-Pakistan relationship? This paper seeks to explore answers to such questions and remedies to help remove doubts and emerging controversies.

## **Soft Power**

Historical events highlight that the traditional security remained at center stage during the Cold War, but in the post-cold war era the security dynamics began to move from its traditional sectors i.e., 'Military' and 'Politics' towards additional non-traditional 'Economic', 'Environmental' and 'Societal' sectors respectively. The debates began in 1990's amongst the traditionalists (Stephen Walt, Realist) and the critical security thinkers of Copenhagen School of Thought (Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Mohammad Ayoob) who argued that "broader definition of security is necessary"<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, the wideners and deepeners emphasized on the necessity of non-traditional security as it was the requirement of changing environment to think beyond state's military and political interest and focus on economics, environmental and societal sectors that could also challenge and threaten state's existence.

With the emergence of new security trends, it was again 1990 when the concept of “soft power” was introduced for the first time by an American political scientist Joseph Nye in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*<sup>2</sup>. Nye in his writings<sup>3</sup> emphasized that both hard and soft powers are important in international politics and gave his view that soft power is closer to Liberal school of thought which is why democracies tend to use soft power rather than using the traditional hard power. His view on soft power signified that the state’s culture, behavior, ideological and political vision can influence and impact the adversary even without using hard power.

In the international political environment, states are using economics as part of their soft power strategies and are effectively influencing regions, however in modern strategic dynamics, economy has appeared as both hard and soft power at different instances. In the contemporary world, India claims to be the biggest democracy and further claims to be using soft power even long before this concept was presented by Joseph Nye in 90’s.<sup>4</sup> India is significantly using Nye’s concept of cultural, political values and foreign policies in strengthening its soft power. However, the research on Indian potential appears to be strong in South Asia region as compared with on international level where it is far behind. India has managed to attract global audience in its cultural expansion and has significantly used soft power strategy to promote its Hindu culture.<sup>5</sup> However, film industry has significantly attracted the South Asian region while the workers of film industries have managed to attract and work with some international media. In addition to this, India is also promoting art and yoga and claim it to be part of their oldest civilization.<sup>6</sup> There is a blend of modern and ancient Hindu culture in the presentation of the science and art of yoga which appears to be an attempt by the Indians to reflect Hindutva as the prime culture fundamental to Hindu civilization. The cultural, political and religious mixtures linked with yoga appears to be a part of soft power approach towards making Hindutva as an Indian or Hindu Ideology.<sup>7</sup> The research publications shows that India is heavily investing in projecting yoga and is making efforts to attract international market and develop room for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). On the other hand, the findings reveal that as of 2016 India has managed to train 700 plus yoga professionals compared to 36 million yoga practitioners in United States as of 2016.<sup>8</sup> Compare to billions of dollars of investment by U.S. in the same field India has managed to spend millions whereas it still requires more efforts on part of India to achieve its economic objective.

Indian film industry is considered world’s largest film making industry with approximate 1,000-1,500 movies per year in some 20 different languages. However the industry is currently growing at the rate of 11 percent and its total revenue as of

October 2017 stands at \$2.1 billion and is estimated to be raised to \$3.7 billion by 2020.<sup>9</sup> It looks very impressive that Bollywood is contributing to country's revenue, however this percentage increase is extremely less compare to what Hollywood is contributing. According to Indian research the annual gross realization of Indian film industry is significantly low \$2.1 billion compared to what U.S. and Canadian film industry makes \$11 billion with 700 films annually.<sup>10</sup>

Indian cinemas' focus remains mostly on glamour, art and fiction that has entertained not only domestic viewers but has also attracted the regional and international audience. This openness to the international market has opened doors for India not only to entertain the wider audience but also to reach out the world with its own narrative towards any issue or an event. Shashi Tharoor, an Indian politician and senior congress leader in his article '*India as a soft power*' expressed his views on the information age and cited of Nye's argument on telling stories that whichever side tells the better story wins. Shashi emphasized that "*India must remain the land of the better story.....India has an extraordinary ability to tell stories that are more persuasive and more attractive than those of its rivals.*"<sup>11</sup> Although he later termed it as not a propaganda strategy but, of course, it would be naive to say that the strategy of telling stories is only for portraying the positive Indian image globally. With these available facts, it can be substantiate that India uses covertly or overtly propaganda strategy as its 'soft power' and uses its film industry as a 'strategic weapon' for conveying its scripted narrative to the outside world. Examples can be taken of movies such as "Border", "Agent Vinod" and "Phantom" in which anti-Pakistani and anti-Muslim sentiments were extensively used. While talking of movie Phantom, it openly speaks Indian narrative against Pakistan. Although it is only a movie but its release targeted regional and international audience who had the view of Indian narrative against Pakistan thus affecting the Pakistani image globally.

## **Indian Print and Electronic Media**

Media in the contemporary world is playing vital role as states foreign policies are commuted through it while raises voice of the state's rhetoric. India claimer of the biggest democracy of the world does not have a free media but rather a controlled and influenced one. The research on Indian print and electronic media has explored certain facts that highlights Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014, has significantly used media as the soft power strategy. Modi has influenced media for projecting the BJP rhetoric in order to gain domestic support and attracts world's leaders.<sup>12</sup>

The Indian print media is facing problems as the government's policies and taxes on media houses increase difficulties for the already weakened media. The

newspapers prices have been kept at the lowest in the world i.e., Rupees 3-5 in order to meet the large population demands and overcome poverty.<sup>13</sup> The research suggests that Modi's strategy of using media as soft power would help the BJP's government as the pro-government news along with the anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistani rhetoric disseminated through this economical medium, would increase government internal support.

The electronic media in India are state's influenced and extensively controlled media houses are running the business for their survival. The media houses appear to be more nationalist where patriotism reaches high levels and the all-good strategy questions the freedom of speech. Either its social media, print or electronic media primarily pro-government news makes the highlights. Most of the pictures of Premier Modi have been taken with certain angle in which his body language speaks volume such as in the "Times of India" front page as an example. Such pictures are used as part of states soft power agenda. Most of the television airtime is given to government and does not allow the coverage of anti-government news, which is contradictory to what media's role is "To tell and speak the TRUTH". In case of an event related to terrorism the media would start blaming Pakistan and this anti-Pakistani and anti-Muslim rhetoric would receive maximum coverage.

"Al Jazeera" has reported on freedom of speech in India and have discussed the recently conducted series of raids by Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI) against NDTV on June 5, 2017 three days after when a BJP spokesperson 'Sambit Patra' in response to questions asked by NDTV female anchor 'Nidhi Razdan', alleged the television channel of serving a specific "agenda" and the threatening debate by the BJP representation towards the anchor person continued.<sup>14</sup> Al Jazeera in this report has significantly mentioned Indian media as being "opinion oriented, nationalist" and focused on "patriotic journalism". It also emphasized on news channels offering 'Modi's Hindu nationalist agenda" with the evidence of coverage of news on Kashmir dispute, political issues securitized on religious beliefs (cattle, cow issue) and mostly Indo-Pakistan relationship. The biases are high as it happens to be a state-controlled media where Modi and BJP government's criticism are unwelcomed. Later, in this paper the research would reflect how Modi's soft power strategy is propagating against Pakistan and satisfying Hindu extremists (Hindutva believers).

## **Indian Media through Liberal Lens**

Media-Power-State are interlinked with each other. Both struggles for power however the lead is taken by the one that can "set the agenda". Whenever something happens, media serves as the prime source of information, therefore it

possesses power, but it depends how influential it is and what role does the media play in a country. While viewing media through the lens of liberalist, the facts emerge that media should be “free” and there should be a space for “Freedom of Speech” but that is not the case with Indian media. The research in this paper highlights that Indian electronic media channels are extensively biased and provides little room to the ‘freedom of speech’. Although it is a democratic country, which talks of interdependence, freedom and peace but Indian media’s voice appears to be limited on papers only while in practice it advocates realist perspective in almost every field. Moreover, the owners of Muslim print media houses face extensive challenges in operating their businesses as they have mixed Muslim and Hindu target audiences. Secondly, the Urdu press faces linguistic challenge and do not get advertisements at all or if they manage to get some it is not enough to overcome the total cost of the paper. This further raise issues thus forcing these print houses to move to Hindi press and publish their material in Hindi or English languages which limits their area of work. The Muslim readers therefore prefer to read Hindi or English paper as it reaches them on time which is not the case with the Urdu newspapers.<sup>15</sup>

Currently, it appears to be the Modi’s government that is ‘setting the agenda’ for dissemination of information through media and dominating the Hindu nationalism, Hindutva, anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistani rhetoric as its prime ‘agenda’. That is why it has been witnessed that compared to previous governments, the religious confrontations have spread countrywide since Modi’s government has taken the office. The BJP government is supportive of Hindu nationalism and that is why Indian media facilitate more coverage to pro-government news and use propaganda strategy against Pakistan and Muslims. Modi’s government has taken hardline approach towards Pakistan and is using mass media extensively to defame Pakistan and show negative image using the soft power strategy. To understand this phenomena examples of “Uri attack” (September 2016) and alleged “Surgical strikes” (September 2016) incident has been taken in order to understand how Indian media has manipulated and used propaganda strategy against Pakistan and how Modi’s nationalist agenda has played its role during these scenarios. This research paper has reviewed newspapers, social media, and other print and electronic media in order to reflect how negative framing has been done in these attacks and what international facts finding reports (BBC and CNN) view on this.

### **Uri Attack - 18 September 2016**

On Sunday, September 18, an Indian army base was attacked by four armed militants who allegedly used hand grenades and weapons that resulted in killing of 17 Indian army personnel and wounded 19 others. (*collaborative media reports*)<sup>16</sup>.

## Indian Response

Indian media reported throughout the day on the event but the visual aid of the targeted locations were rarely shown except for few aerial shots including smoke coming out of the camps, soldiers and military trucks entering and moving towards the targeted area. The same day Indian Director General of Military Operations Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh conducted a press conference and alleged Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) for this attack and also blamed Pakistan for supporting these terrorists as he mentioned in his brief that, *“Pakistani marking has been found on the weapons recovered from slain terrorists, the concerns have been shared with Pakistani counterpart.”*<sup>17</sup>

Modi while addressing in Kozhikode, Kerala although did not take Pakistan’s name but throughout his speech referred it as “neighboring country” and kept bashing it for allegedly supportive of militants and intimidated of considering actions in this response.<sup>18</sup> The proponent of “Hindutva” the Hindu nationalist yoga guru Baba Ramdev also added his voice on Uri attack and emphasized that, *“If we want to bring peace in the country, we should first eliminate Pakistan sponsors terror camps in Pok”*.

## Pakistani Response

Pakistani civil-military leadership refused the allegations of any involvement in the Uri attack and urged India to provide evidence to contribute toward the investigations. “India immediately puts blame on Pakistan without doing any investigation. We reject this” Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Nafees Zakaraiya. “Refuting the unfounded and premature Indian allegations, the Pakistan DGMO asked his counterpart to share any actionable intelligence” – ISPR<sup>19</sup>

## Indian Propaganda - Liberal Theory

Liberal theory talks about the actions and responses of the media in certain situations and circumstances, that is why it appears to be both ‘Normative’ and ‘Behavioral’ urging media how it “should” behave and how it “Do” behave. Liberals advocate ‘freedom of speech’ and ‘free media’ and emphasize on “separation of media from the state”. However in Indian media, is not separable from the state as government is setting the ‘agenda’ and is very much influential in this regard.<sup>20</sup> Indian media continued its propaganda strategy and reported of handing over proof on Uri attack facilitators, attackers and two guides who they alleged of transported the militants from Pakistani side of Kashmir to India in September 2016<sup>21</sup>. Later investigations revealed that some of the proofs provided to Pakistan were not

supportive of Indian claim. Indian National Investigation Agency (NIA) on a social media platform tweeted that:

*“NIA to file a closure report in the case relating to guides (Faisal Hussain Awan and Ahsan Khursheed) of Uri Terror Attack as it found no evidence against them, they will be sent back as the charges framed against them could not be substantiated.”<sup>22</sup>*

During the Uri attack incident coverage, Indian media followed its ‘set agenda’ i.e., Hindu nationalism and Anti-Muslim and Anti Pakistani rhetoric. Indian electronic, social and print media published data related to the attack, for instance, allegations of “Pakistan involvement in the attack”, “direct involvement of Kashmir based militants - JeM”, “surety statements by civil-military leadership and Indian hard power response” and “repetitive anti-Pakistani material on television and print media”. That’s how Indian media conveyed information indirectly to viewers that “India would response.” Within the limits of liberal theory, the media disseminate information to masses of a possible response or attack by Indian authorities that was picked up from the civil-military statements of Indian capability of responding to adversary. The behavior in accordance with the liberal view was presented to the audience in this case, Indian public and Hindu nationalists who were mentally prepared of a possible action. This strategy was adapted after Uri attack and prior to alleged “surgical strikes” claim by them came exactly after 10 days of Uri attack.

### **Alleged Surgical Strike in Pakistan - September 28, 2016**

On September 28, Indian civil- military authorities held a press conference and claimed of conducted “Surgical strike”. No evidence was shared neither details were made public which created controversy that if such an action had been conducted than why the pictorial evidence had not been shared or made public. Many media houses showed the propaganda throughout the day with some claiming of taken revenge of Uri attack (September 18, 2016).<sup>23</sup> Pakistani government refused the claim and the military leadership declared such claim as “baseless” and “false”. The Pakistani civil-military leadership asked India for evidence of any kind but no conducive material was shared as evidence with the authorities. Indian publication house “The Wire” covered the entire page with Pakistani media news of denial and yet opened door for controversy.<sup>24</sup> The research highlights that it was the building pressure on Modi’s government that force them of taking extreme actions, however the alleged claim of surgical strike did not help, as no handful evidence was either presented by the Indian government nor any traces of evidence of “surgical strike’ could be located in Pakistani side of Kashmir. Pakistani army invited journalists and took them to the LoC where India claimed of carrying out attack but nothing convincing was found. Pakistani authorities reiterated that cross border firing at LoC

was carried out on September 28-29 however no traces of “surgical strikes” were found.<sup>25</sup>

## **International Media and United Nations Response to the Surgical Strike**

In response to Indian anti-Pakistani propaganda, international media including CNN and BBC have published their facts finding report on the ‘surgical strikes’ and ‘Uri attack’ respectively however nothing evident has been found. CNN an influential American News channel house covered the story of Uri attack and published some facts in its report. The report highlighted that India’s Home Minister Rajnath Singh explicitly alleged Pakistan of being a ‘terrorist state’ and recommended that it should be “isolated.” The accusations made by the minister stated that, *“The people involved in the attack were, “highly trained, heavily armed and specially equipped.” and “I am deeply disappointed with Pakistan’s continued and direct support to terrorism and terrorist groups.”*

CNN officials have responded to these allegations and have stated, *“Although Rajnath Singh has alleged Pakistan of supporting terrorism however he did not offer any facts to support his assertion, nor did he say whether he believes Pakistan was involved in the attack.”* BBC report conducted an investigation and reported that,

*“Despite the use of the term “surgical strikes”, the Indians definitely did not airdrop commandos to hit “launching pads of militants” inside Pakistani-held territory, or conduct ground assaults deep into the Pakistan-administered side. But they did cross the Line of Control (LoC), in some cases by more than a kilometer, to hit nearby Pakistani border posts.”* However, *“Despite the claims in the Indian media, the BBC could find little evidence that militants had been hit.”* and *“There is no conclusive evidence to prove either side’s claims - the truth probably lies somewhere in the middle.”*<sup>26</sup>

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon’s spokespersons Stephane Dujarric in a press conference stated that United Nations Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) has not ‘directly observed’ any firing across the LoC related to the incident.<sup>27</sup>

## **Strategy**

“Strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve some end; a purpose together with a system of measures for its accomplishment.”<sup>28</sup> With the changing environment after the World War II, the doctrinal shifts were seen. These shifts began to emerge as strategies that not only required or were restricted to the function of uniform personnel but further extended for the use by others including civilians, policy

makers and companies etc. as well. Strategists including Clausewitz, Rear Admiral J.C. Wylie, Sun Tzu and Kautilya all have given their distinct dimensions of strategic approaches for achieving specific goals and objectives. In the contemporary world, states are using these approaches for targeting their audience in order to attain their required objectives. In accordance with Joseph Nye's work on strengthening soft power capability, Indian government is making all possible efforts in improving cultural and political values whilst its foreign policy exhibits the reflection of Kautilya<sup>29</sup> and Sun Tzu's strategies in order to achieve its strategic goals that is the regional hegemony.

### **India's Strategic Objectives**

States often talk about their strategic objectives however these strategic intentions become prominent when states behave in certain manner with different adversaries and also by their political and ideological changes with time. Similarly, India would talk optimistically of interdependency, freedom of speech, democracy, peace and strengthened economy however practically their behavior is far different from what they say and claim. As per "The Wire" an Indian publication house it is highlighted that either its Modi's government or its the predecessors none of them have ever explicitly written on Indian strategic intensions, however it is the behavior of the government that reflect in which direction these strategic objectives are moving. The publication has highlighted five strategic objectives that have been obtained by Modi's diplomatic activities. These are:

- "Prioritising an integrated neighbourhood; 'Neighbourhood First'."
- "Leveraging international partnerships to promote India's domestic development."
- "Ensuring a stable and multipolar balance of power in the Indo-Pacific; 'Act East'."
- "Dissuading Pakistan from supporting terrorism."
- "Advancing Indian representation and leadership on matters of global governance."<sup>30</sup>

The research on these articulated objectives suggests that although Indian government claims to have supportive and friendly relations with its neighbours whereas in practical terms this is not the case as India does not enjoy cordial relations with its neighbors. Either its Western, Northern or Eastern border, smaller and bigger like China tension exists with all neighboring states in different contexts. The facts that dominate most are that India's strategic objectives are significantly are of realists perspective and therefore are related to (a) Regional hegemonic power (b)

Balance of Power with China in South Asian region, and (c) Defaming and isolating Pakistan from rest of the world.

## **Sun Tzu and Kautilya's Strategies**

Both classic strategists Sun Tzu and Kautilya have given various approaches to be adapted for attaining strategic objectives. In dealing with its neighbours India utilizes elements from the work of both the strategists in its soft power strategy of ruling the South Asian region. While talking of Indian foreign policy towards Pakistan, India mobilizes a number of strategies towards Pakistan, however most recently 'soft power' strategy has significantly been emerged as Modi's strategic weapon. Modi '*sarkar*' is using soft power as its contemporary approach while dealing with neighbours. Sun Tzu's strategy of "deception" towards Pakistan, an example can be of alleged surgical strike in Pakistani side of Kashmir. Both Sun Tzu and Kautilya emphasized on use of 'spies' and that's what every country does, however arrest of Kulbushan Yadav (March 2016) is an example of inward spy that India was using for destabilizing Balochistan region. Modi's government has categorically made number of efforts to 'isolate' Pakistan by declaring it a 'terrorist state', however all of its propaganda and anti-Pakistan agenda has failed to serve 'any good' and tension between the two arch-rivals continues. This concept of 'isolation' was given by Kautilya whose philosophy holds significant influence on Indian foreign policy making. Using this concept of 'isolation' by Kautilya and 'effective strategies and tactics' given by Sun Tzu, India is targeting at the soft belly of Pakistan and has been successfully propagating anti-Pakistani agenda worldwide.

## **Findings**

The key findings confirm that India use propaganda strategy against Pakistan. The information collected on Uri Attack and surgical strikes revealed that all Indian newspapers including Times of India, Hindustan Times, Tribune-India, The Wire, DD and NDTV all are nationalist and promote Hindu nationalism, the "Hindutva" ideology. Their agenda-setting is done by the Indian government and any statement that goes against the government and doesn't speak Hinduism strict actions are taken against the media house who are already weak and cannot operate freely. The research highlights that in the present of Modi's government, India is not moving towards its claim of being a secular country but rather being a rigid Hinduism ideology. These observations have been evident throughout the research that Indian media covers news related to Hindu-Muslim confrontations where Muslims are portrayed as enemies of India by showing their religious rituals of cattle worship against cattle slaughtering for food. Also, Modi's government keep silence on incidents related to violence against Indian and Kashmiri Muslims and Christians

and other minorities. All media reporting related to Pakistan are negatively framed and used for worldwide propaganda. India, claims of being democratic country and on verbal account appears to be promoters of 'Liberals view' however in practical terms India has proved to be a realist country. It is controlling media and other institutions under the same 'Realist belief' that world is anarchic and states should make use of all possible efforts in keeping its sovereignty and integrity. The research further implies that by adapting soft power strategy it does not mean that India would on Liberals' stage for peaceful regional objects but would actual add an additional layer of power known as soft-power to its already existing hard-power strategy. Furthermore, the adaptation of Sun Tzu, Kautilya, Joseph Nye and Clausewitz strategies in preparing their foreign policy and their strategy of cultural values promotion through media, is one of the key findings that intimidates Indian intentions of regional expansion in terms of cultural, political and religious so that the prime objective of regional hegemony can be attained through the use of extensive "Soft Power".

## **Conclusion**

The paper has revolved and contributed in qualitative research in order to understand how the notion of Soft Power is manipulated and later used for the states and individuals' own interests. The concept of "Soft Power" as explained by Joseph Nye has been used cleverly by Modi's government and building their pro- Hindu Nationalism stronger. The Liberal theory concept used in the research paper has made visible the prime agenda behind India media that propaganda strategy against Pakistanis, Kashmiris and Indian Muslims should be promoted so that this rhetoric reach out to everyone across the world and these Muslims and Pakistan can be proved to be terrorists and should be isolated in such regard.

The comparative analysis done amongst the Indian, Pakistani and international media for coverage of same events at different platforms added important aspect and information to the research that signifies how Indian media use propaganda strategy against Pakistan and how media is exported by Modi for power struggle. The paper also concludes that BJP's rhetoric is pro-Hindu nationalism that is building space for Hindu extremists and "Hindutva" ideology which is not only alarming and threatening to Indian peace but also emerging as a coming regional threat and anarchy. The use of concept like deception, spies and isolation of immediate neighbors was recorded during Uri attack, alleged surgical strikes and Kalbhushan's arrest for espionage and terrorism in Pakistan where media propaganda was extensively used to isolate Pakistan and defame it international level. Whilst the arrest of spies like Kulbushan Yadev in Pakistan territory proves Modi's rigid and extreme intentions towards Pakistan and his subsequent anti-

Pakistan and confession of India's meddling in Balochistan. All the research conducted in the paper emphasized on the extremist agenda of Indian government that demonstrates that how Modi is effectively using media and its soft power strategies in its foreign policy, which is affecting peace and stability in South Asian region. Hence India is using its Soft Power as a strategic weapon for attaining its strategic objectives, especially regional hegemony and expansion of Hinduism.

## NOTES

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