

States soft power utilisation in the twenty-first century: pros and cons from the Nigerian perspective

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Abstract

This article analyses the challenges that Nigeria is confronted with in regard to its potential and utilisation of soft power. The utilisation of soft power among state actors has become a dominant feature in international relations. The expensive nature of military actions, human loss, coupled with the fact that it does not always lead to compliance with international laws, has led to the popularity of soft power politics. For a developing country like Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa, the significance in annexing its soft power potential within and outside Africa cannot be overstated. The Twenty-First Century has witnessed massive investment from countries even with authoritarian government systems towards improving their soft power potential. How Nigeria utilizes its soft power potential will determine its level of development and influence in regional and global politics. The article outlines various challenges, such as corruption and insecurity that affect Nigeria's capacity to explore its soft power potential. Also, the article finds that Nigeria has massive soft power capacity and that there is a realistic potential to overcome the existing challenges in order to deploy its soft power. The article recommends, amongst others, that the "Nigeria-first" foreign policy should be skewed to attract foreign direct investments; also, it suggests that the departments of culture and tourism in the national and sub-national governments should formulate purposive courses of action that will usher a pragmatic development of Nigeria's soft power potential.

Keywords: Soft and Hard Power ; Corruption ; human rights ; State power ;
democracy

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