

## **Developing Sri Lankan International Relations through International Communication: Use of Soft Power Resources.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Sri Lankan Buddhist Cultural thinking and humane thoughts result in the productive process of developing international relations. This study focused on the application of soft power resources in the development of international relations in Sri Lanka. Resources of culture, values of political ideals and policies were used in the preparation of communication programmes, which is based on the perspective of Buddhist religion and its philosophy. Despite the fact that hard power requires experience with the traditional system of international relations of coercion and payments, soft power assumes the significant relevance and attraction of the Sri Lankan cultural resources. Soft power also retains the ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in developing Sri Lankan identity and political image in the modern political and economic social milieu.

Qualitative methods were utilized for the gathering and analysis of data. Semi-structured interviews and textual analysis were used to identify the substance and salience of the Buddhist cultural and local value resources. Additionally, professionals who have much experience in the use of communication in developing international relations were interviewed to consider the existing tools and strategies in this field and the importance of Buddhist cultural resources were discovered and described using textual analysis and discourse analysis.

Finally, this study argues that the use of Buddhist cultural resources and thought systems ensure the attraction and efficacy in the preparation of communication programmes and content for the development of international relations and building of foreign policy. The concept of four noble humane qualities in Buddhism which are Maithree, Karuna, Muditha and Upekka remain especially important in communication competency and rationale in developing effective messages and programmes of international relations. Additionally, the local cultural heritage and their values can be utilised in the planning and implementation of foreign policy in both Western and non-western countries. This study argues by asserting that both post-colonial thinking of local government and post-imperial interference of western dominant nations could be mediated through international relations to a middle path that rejects the extremism in the political and economic systems.

*Keywords: Soft Power, International Communication, Sri Lankan Buddhist Culture and Value system, Coercion, Attraction*

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