

Title: Soft Power Competition: A Comparative Analysis of China and the US in South Asia

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Abstract: In the current multipolar world, China has emerged as a formidable competitor to the United States, employing soft power strategies to expand its influence, particularly in South Asia—a region of strategic importance for both nations. This study utilizes Joseph Nye's soft power theory to comparatively analyze the approaches of China and the US. Employing case study analysis, including document research and content analysis, the research reveals that China strategically utilizes soft power by promoting its culture in educational institutions and leveraging the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) for trade infrastructure development in South Asia. Conversely, the US relies on its renowned education system, attracting students from the region, and implements soft power through foreign aid, trade, investment, and security cooperation. As the global order undergoes transformations, comprehending these soft power dynamics is crucial for deciphering the intricacies of contemporary international relations.

Keywords: Soft power China–US competition South Asia Joseph Nye Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

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