UNIVERSIDAD Đ CÓRDOBA

THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ON SOFT POWER STRATEGY: MODERATING ROLE OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

A Case of United Arab Emirates

EL IMPACTO DE LA DIPLOMACIA PÚBLICA SOBRE LA ESTRATEGIA DE PODER DÉBIL: LA FUNCIÓN MODERADORA DE LA COMUNICACIÓN Y LOS MEDIOS

Supervisors: Dr. Rafael Cejudo, University of Cordoba &

Dr. Miguel Ángel Martin, University of Seville

Submitted by: Amal Al Breiki

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ABSTRACT

Public diplomacy is the hub of strengthening soft power and international relations, where media and communication play an important role in boosting soft power and international relations. Therefore, this study presents the impact of public diplomacy on soft power and international relations within the specific context of the UAE. In addition, the study examines the moderating role of media and communication between public diplomacy and international relations, soft power. It employs SEM analysis to empirically evaluate the relationships between these variables as viewed by UAE citizens. The research supports the hypothesis that public diplomacy significantly influences soft power, with approximately 46.7% of the variance in soft power being explainable by public diplomacy. This suggests that enhancing public diplomacy through improved foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid can significantly contribute to increasing the UAE soft power. The study also identifies four crucial determinants of soft power: foreign policy, international cooperation, UAE leadership, and economic aid. All four factors have a statistically significant positive impact on soft power. This underlines that efforts to augment the UAE soft power should focus on these areas.

However, the potential moderating role of media and communication in the relationship between public diplomacy (comprising foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and soft power (including governance and people & value) could not be definitively confirmed or refuted, due to a lack of an interaction term in the regression model. The analysis further reveals a significant positive relationship between public diplomacy and international relations, indicating that effective public diplomacy strategies can enhance international relations. Additionally, foreign policy, international cooperation, and UAE leadership significantly influence international relations, while economic aid does not substantially affect them. Finally, the study proves that soft power mediates the relationship

between public diplomacy and international relations. This suggests that soft power shapes how public diplomacy affects international relations. Consequently, enhancing international relations through public diplomacy should consider the integral role of soft power. Overall, this study underscores the significant role of public diplomacy in shaping soft power and international relations. It also emphasizes the necessity of considering soft power as a mediator between public diplomacy and international relations. These findings offer valuable insights for policymakers in the UAE and other nations aiming to strengthen their international standing through public diplomacy and soft power.

On the other hand, the qualitative analysis of the perceptions of UAE citizens on the country's use of public diplomacy, media communication, and soft power strategies in shaping its international image and relationships. The research involved extensive qualitative interviews, eliciting views on various aspects, including foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, economic aid, and the media's role in promoting Emirati culture and values. The research got 352 completed and filled out survey questionnaires out of 500. Qualitative data was collected through 6 semi-structured interviews with respondents. The study found a significant positive correlation between public diplomacy elements (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid) and dimensions of soft power (governance, people and values, media, and communications). The research suggests that UAE media platforms, backed by appropriate regulations and strategic objectives, are strong enough to influence global audiences positively, promoting UAE cultural values and its soft power strategy. The study also highlights opportunities for further development in UAE public diplomacy, including promoting diversity and inclusiveness, increasing social media engagement, and improving access to Emirati culture, while maintaining a balance between traditional values and modernization. The UAE also upholds freedom of speech within a framework of governance that ensures social harmony and national security.

The findings revealed that UAE investment in infrastructure, education, research, technological innovation, and support for global environmental initiatives significantly contributed to enhancing the nation's soft power. It also highlighted the positive impact of public diplomacy and soft power on international relations from the UAE citizens' perspective. The study concludes by underscoring the critical role of media and communication in moderating the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power, ultimately shaping UAE international relations.

Resumen

La diplomacia pública es el eje para fortalecer el poder blando y las relaciones internacionales, donde los medios de comunicación y la comunicación juegan un papel importante en el impulso de ese poder blando y tales relaciones internacionales. Este estudio presenta el impacto de la diplomacia pública en el poder blando y las relaciones internacionales dentro del contexto específico de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos (EAU). Además, el estudio examina el papel moderador de los medios de comunicación y la comunicación entre la diplomacia pública y las relaciones internacionales. Emplea el análisis SEM para evaluar empíricamente las relaciones entre estas variables según la percepción de los ciudadanos de los EAU. La investigación respalda la hipótesis de que la diplomacia pública influye significativamente en el poder blando, explicando aproximadamente el 46.7% de la variación en dicho poder. Esto sugiere que mejorar la diplomacia pública a través de políticas exteriores mejoradas, cooperación internacional, liderazgo y ayuda económica puede contribuir significativamente a aumentar el poder blando de los EAU. El estudio también identifica cuatro determinantes cruciales del poder blando: política exterior, cooperación internacional, liderazgo de los EAU y ayuda económica. Los cuatro factores tienen un impacto positivo estadísticamente significativo en el poder blando. Esto subraya que los esfuerzos para aumentar el poder blando de los EAU deben centrarse en estas áreas.

Sin embargo, el posible papel moderador de los medios de comunicación y la comunicación en la relación entre la diplomacia pública (que incluye política exterior, cooperación internacional, liderazgo y ayudas económicas) y el poder blando (que incluye gobernanza, gente y valores) no pudo ser confirmado ni refutado definitivamente, debido a la falta de un término de interacción en el modelo de regresión. El análisis revela además una relación positiva significativa entre la diplomacia pública y las relaciones internacionales, lo

que indica que las estrategias efectivas de diplomacia pública pueden mejorar las relaciones internacionales. Además, la política exterior, la cooperación internacional y el liderazgo de los EAU influyen significativamente en las relaciones internacionales, mientras que la ayuda económica no las afecta sustancialmente. Finalmente, el estudio demuestra que el poder blando media la relación entre la diplomacia pública y las relaciones internacionales. Esto sugiere que el poder blando moldea cómo la diplomacia pública afecta las relaciones internacionales. En consecuencia, mejorar las relaciones internacionales a través de la diplomacia pública debe considerar el papel integral del poder blando. En general, este estudio subraya el papel significativo de la diplomacia pública en la configuración del poder blando y las relaciones internacionales. También enfatiza la necesidad de considerar el poder blando como un mediador entre la diplomacia pública y las relaciones internacionales. Estos hallazgos ofrecen valiosos conocimientos para los responsables de políticas en los EAU y otras naciones que buscan fortalecer su posición internacional a través de la diplomacia pública y el poder blando.

Por otro lado, el análisis cualitativo de las percepciones de los ciudadanos de los EAU sobre el uso de la diplomacia pública, la comunicación mediática y las estrategias de poder blando del país para dar forma a su imagen y relaciones internacionales. La investigación involucró extensas entrevistas cualitativas, recopilando opiniones sobre varios aspectos, incluyendo política exterior, cooperación internacional, liderazgo, ayuda económica y el papel de los medios en la promoción de la cultura y los valores emiratíes. La investigación obtuvo 352 cuestionarios completados de 500. Los datos cualitativos se recolectaron a través de 6 entrevistas semiestructuradas con los encuestados. El estudio encontró una correlación positiva significativa entre los elementos de la diplomacia pública (política exterior, cooperación internacional, liderazgo y ayuda económica) y las dimensiones del poder blando (gobernanza, gente y valores, medios de comunicación y comunicaciones). La investigación sugiere que las

plataformas mediáticas de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos (EAU), respaldadas por regulaciones adecuadas y objetivos estratégicos, son lo suficientemente sólidas como para influir positivamente en las audiencias globales, promoviendo los valores culturales de los EAU y su estrategia de poder blando. El estudio también destaca oportunidades para seguir desarrollando la diplomacia pública de los EAU, incluyendo la promoción de la diversidad y la inclusión, el aumento del compromiso en redes sociales y la mejora del acceso a la cultura emiratí, mientras se mantiene un equilibrio entre los valores tradicionales y la modernización. Asimismo, los EAU garantizan la libertad de expresión dentro de un marco de gobernanza que asegura la armonía social y la seguridad nacional.

Los hallazgos revelaron que la inversión de los EAU en infraestructura, educación, investigación, innovación tecnológica y apoyo a las iniciativas ambientales globales contribuyeron significativamente a mejorar el poder blando de la nación. También destacaron el impacto positivo de la diplomacia pública y el poder blando en las relaciones internacionales desde la perspectiva de los ciudadanos de los EAU. El estudio concluye subrayando el papel crítico de los medios de comunicación y la comunicación en moderar la relación entre la diplomacia pública y el poder blando, moldeando en última instancia las relaciones internacionales de los EAU.

Palabras clave: Diplomacia pública, poder blando, relaciones internacionales, contexto de los EAU, Medios.

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I would like to dedicate this work to my country specifically, because UAE has given me a lot and inspired me with its wise leadership and international Strategy, encouraging me to continue studying and to go longer, since the time of graduation from High School until now. I would like to thank all the Diplomats who agreed to interview them and collected insight information about the impact of UAE public diplomacy on the Soft Power Strategy. As a concrete result of this, I will publish the article "The Impact of Public Diplomacy on Soft Power and International Relation: Moderating Role of Media and Communication in UAE Context". This research article tests the hypotheses of how UAE public diplomacy affects soft power and international

relations. As well, as how media and communication strengthen the relationships between public diplomacy and both soft power and international relations.

In this moment of my life, I am happy with what has been done and despite all the difficulties and challenges that I faced during my PhD journey.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, SOFT POWER, AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.1   Background of the study

A nation's ability to impact tastes and behaviours without coercion or force is known as soft power. Krzymowski (2022) highlights the importance of the UAE foreign aid program to its soft power strategy and support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UAE has positioned itself as a significant actor in international development by strategically distributing aid, gaining the hearts of recipient countries, and enhancing its reputation worldwide. This supports the UAE's efforts to sway international relations and policy favourably. Using diplomatic relations, notably public policy, as a soft power strategy is widely applicable, even though Krzyzaniak (2018) does not expressly reference the UAE. The UAE has invested money in public policy, most notably to enhance soft power. These investments advance the reputation and culture of the UAE and cultivate ties that advance the political and economic objectives of the nation. Saberi, Paris, and Marochi (2018) claim that the UAE has successfully used the film sector as a part of its soft power. The UAE has effectively established itself as a dynamic and cosmopolitan nation by holding international film festivals and marketing itself as a luxury travel destination. This cultural and touristic attractiveness enhances its status and clout on the global stage.

On the other hand, Matheson (2020) offers an opposing perspective on the UAE use of digital authoritarianism as a factor undermining its soft power. Despite technical developments, the UAE restrictions on online freedoms may damage its ability to project soft power by casting a shadow on its reputation as a modern, forward-thinking country. Although not explicitly addressed in the passages above, the UAE also uses significant infrastructure development to exercise soft power in other areas. This is especially evident because it has built world-famous buildings like the Burj Khalifa and the Palm Islands, which has improved its position and reputation abroad. These instances highlight the complexity and scope of the UAE soft power

policy. Even though these tactics have been somewhat effective, it is essential to remember that they each have particular drawbacks and difficulties.

Ekşi and Erol (2018) examine soft power and public diplomacy, with a focus on the country's ascent and subsequent decline[1]. This decline indicates a reduction in the country's influence and attractiveness internationally. Factors contributing to this downturn could include political changes, economic challenges, shifts in cultural appeal, or criticism of domestic and foreign policies. Essentially, it implies that the strategies that once enhanced the nation's global standing and perception are no longer as effective, leading to a diminished role or reputation internationally. This decline is significant as it affects the country's ability to influence other nations through non-coercive means. In the UAE, Kourgiotis (2020) analyses the idea of *"Moderate Islam"* as a public diplomacy tactic. The study seems to focus on how the UAE manages its international relations and uses religion to promote itself. Kaneva and Cassinger (2022) recommend a gender-centered strategy for nation branding and public diplomacy. Their study demonstrates how a gender-inclusive viewpoint might affect how public diplomacy develops in the future. The study by Al Suwaidi (2021) on how the UAE uses soft power in a global setting raises questions about how the UAE makes use of its cultural, economic, and political clout. Lee (2015) focuses on how education might be used in Asia as a tool for cultural diplomacy and soft power. Lee probably talks about how Asian nations have used their educational systems and institutions to influence other nations and raise their worldwide standing.

The paper by Antwi-Boateng and Alhashmi (2022) examines the growth of the UAE as a global soft power, describing its present methods and impending difficulties. Although the reference is vague about these methods' specifics, it is assumed that they involve diplomatic,

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[1] Subsequent decline is a country's reduction in international influence and attractiveness, possibly due to political shifts, economic challenges, cultural appeal changes, or criticisms of domestic and foreign policies, impacting its soft power and global standing.

cultural, and economic considerations. Melissen (2011) presents an overview of soft power and public diplomacy in East Asia, presumably contrasting various approaches and results among regional nations. According to Atkinson (2014), educational exchanges can be seen as a sort of public diplomacy. This underscores how public policy ties that are cooperative, and collaborative are to improve a country's standing and influence abroad.

Media does play a key role in propagating and influencing perceptions, both domestically and internationally. In the UAE, domestic media efforts, such as the radio program "Studio 1" have transformed into crucial vehicles for promoting humanitarian causes, national achievements, social development projects within the UAE and most importantly allowing interaction between leaders and citizens, and advancing the nation's soft power strategy. As a long-running and trusted radio program, "Studio 1" connects citizens with leaders and organizations as a platform for open interaction and discussion, building direct dialogue and reinforcing national cohesion. It offers a unique space where the public can voice concerns, ask questions, and engage with government and civil society representatives. The program regularly highlights the UAE's domestic and international humanitarian efforts, raising awareness and encouraging community involvement. It is important to note that through storytelling, interviews, and interactive segments, "Studio 1" helps build a civic-minded culture aligned with national values and vision. As a tool of soft power, it effectively showcases the UAE's commitment to social responsibility, cultural inclusiveness, and progressive development. The good stories created and spread through these platforms improve the nation's internal and external reputation. This boosts the UAE appeal and power, which are at the heart of soft power. These initiatives considerably affect internal aid, but they also unintentionally influence the UAE efforts to provide aid abroad. They increase worldwide goodwill and improve the UAE standing by portraying the country as a responsible and helpful actor. As

explained by Krzymowski (2022), this increases the effectiveness of its foreign aid as a soft power tactic.

International relations are discussed in Pamment's (2016) research as a nexus of public diplomacy, soft power, and development communication. It probably demonstrates how aid openness may improve a country's reputation and influence. The study by Zaghlami examines Algeria's foreign strategy, concentrating on the functions of soft power and public diplomacy. It may describe how Algeria uses various channels to advance its foreign policy goals. Cherkaoui (2018) investigates how Qatar uses global media in its public diplomacy initiatives, most likely with a focus on the Gulf Crisis. Zaabi & Awamleh (2019) look into the factors that affect soft power in the UAE. This might offer insightful information about the operationalization of the factors that contribute to a soft power.

Abdi et al. (2018) put a diplomacy model forth with the ability to translate public diplomacy into diplomatic results. This calls for research into the potential diplomatic value of athletic events and interactions. Al-Otaibi's (2019) research probably sheds light on the precise methods Saudi Arabia employed to affect its standing and reputation in the UK. For instance, in the seventeenth century, the French invested a great deal of effort into managing their country's reputation because they saw it as one of the primary sources of a nation's power and went to much greater lengths than other European countries to shape their country's image abroad (Melissen, 2005). However, the UAE is an example of a soft power condition of variety and inclusivity as it is a melting pot of various cultures and nationalities. It is essential to recognize how the UAE has effectively harnessed its cultural diversity and inclusivity as a cornerstone of its soft power. Unlike traditional hard power that relies on military and economic might, soft power thrives on the ability to attract and co-opt rather than coerce. The UAE, a vibrant tapestry of over 200 nationalities, displays this through its policies and initiatives that promote cultural exchange and tolerance. This heterogeneity is a demographic feature and a

strategic asset in UAE international relations. For example, events like the Dubai Expo 2020 exemplify the UAE commitment to fostering a global dialogue where ideas and cultural expressions from around the world converge. The UAE education and tourism sectors, bolstered by world-class infrastructure and a welcoming visa regime, further extend its soft power reach, allowing it to be seen as a regional hub and a global crossroads of cultures and ideas. Such initiatives enhance the UAE reputation and influence on the global stage, demonstrating the effectiveness of its public diplomacy in enhancing soft power. The UAE multicultural character increases its appeal as a soft power player because of the sizeable presence of the Indian diaspora and other expatriate populations. The UAE has used its thriving economy as a soft power tool. With rich career opportunities, it has drawn a large international workforce, particularly the Indian diaspora, creating economic alliances and enhancing diplomatic relations. UAE has successfully attracted a large international workforce, with the Indian diaspora being a particularly significant component. This phenomenon is not just a testament to the UAE economic allure, but it also underscores a strategic approach to building economic alliances and enhancing diplomatic relations. As a factual illustration, India's bilateral trade was valued at about $60 billion in 2019, making the UAE India's third-largest trade partner. The presence of over 3.3 million Indian expatriates in the UAE as of 2020 plays a crucial role in this economic relationship.

These expatriates are engaged in diverse sectors ranging from high-tech and engineering to construction and healthcare, significantly contributing to the UAE economy. The significance of this relationship was further highlighted in 2019 when the UAE awarded its highest civilian honor, the Order of Zayed, to the Indian Prime Minister [Narendra Modi]. This honor reflected the strength of diplomatic ties and the interdependence and mutual respect between the two nations. Additionally, Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed between India and the UAE in 2022 aimed to increase bilateral trade to $100 billion within five

years, underscoring the strategic economic alliance. These examples demonstrate how integrating the Indian diaspora in the UAE has been pivotal in creating robust economic and diplomatic ties, integral to the UAE soft power strategy. Soft power also extends to the educational sector, with universities in the UAE working with foreign organizations on research, student exchanges, and curriculum development. Since Thucydides (1954), Machiavelli (1935), and Melissen (2005), power has been central to international relations studies. Baldwin (2002) calls it the most important yet least understood concept. Power is the ability of one actor to influence another's behavior unnaturally (Baldwin, 2002). Scholars have examined power in their publications throughout international relations history, starting with early realist works that downplayed norms, morality, and public opinion (Baldwin, 2002). Soft power has become an important concept for international actors (Baldwin, 2002), but academic literature has yet to fully explore it.

The certain historical studies, namely, have concentrated on the purported continuity of contemporary soft power methods with country-type propaganda (Tsygankov, 2013). Soft power is known to be the capacity to obtain what the nation wants without using force or money. Accordingly, citizens do not need to spend as much on carrots and sticks to sway citizens' way if they make them want what they want. A nation's diplomatic relations are the roots of its hard power, or capacity for coercion. The allure of a nation's culture, political ideas, and policies gives rise to soft power. The soft power is increased when other people regard any country's policies as being justified.

Second, there are some publications (Khatiashvili, 2018; Kosachev, 2012; Silayev, 2014) just notice the emergence of countries' soft power strategies and make an effort to summarize their key characteristics without delving deeper into the subject. The UAE educational policies, which support international academic partnerships and student exchange initiatives, are a powerful soft power tool. In addition to facilitating information and innovation

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exchange, these measures also advance intercultural understanding and long-lasting connections, strengthening the nation's standing and power abroad. Although these exchange programs promote cultural interchange, the government governs and regulates them. These guidelines include a variety of topics, including rules governing visas, academic requirements, and the rights and responsibilities of students (Nye, 2013). How the UAE handles these issues significantly impacts its reputation as a welcoming and attractive place for overseas students, which will impact its soft power. A third area of scholarly research relates to the theoretical underpinnings of such soft power initiatives. For example, they examine how Joseph Nye's initial idea of "soft power" has been applied in one nation and contrast it with how it is applied in other nations (Lukyanov, 2009; Troitski, 2011). Others examine the idea's compatibility with the nation's present foreign policy (Monaghan, 2013; Pilko, 2012).

The UAE government has established a precise and focused soft power strategy emphasizing increasing the nation's international influence and reputation. Diplomacy of influence, the diplomacy of humanity, diplomacy of culture and knowledge, and diplomacy of the economy are the four primary pillars of the UAE soft power strategy. This entails presenting a favorable image of the nation to the outside world, providing aid to people worldwide, fostering intellectual and cultural interchange, and using the nation's thriving economy to its advantage. Under this pillar, the UAE seeks to strengthen its participation and influence in international organizations and for a while exhibit its avant-garde solutions to world problems. The UAE aspires to continue to play a significant role in providing support and aid to those in need across the globe. UAE has established itself as a significant player in global humanitarian efforts, reflecting its commitment to providing support and aid to those in need worldwide. This commitment is not just a moral stance but also a strategic aspect of its soft power and international diplomacy. A notable example of the UAE humanitarian efforts is its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The UAE provided over 2,000 metric tons of aid to more than 135

countries as of 2021, including critical medical supplies and vaccines. This aid supported struggling healthcare systems globally and highlighted the UAE capability and willingness to provide timely, practical assistance during a global crisis.

Another example of the UAE commitment to global aid is its contribution to the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan. Since the conflict's escalation in 2015, the UAE has been one of the largest donors to Yemen, providing essential food, medical supplies, and development assistance. According to the Financial Tracking Service data, the UAE contributed over $6 billion in aid to Yemen between 2015 and 2021. This assistance played a crucial role in alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, highlighting the UAE dedication to supporting vulnerable populations in conflict zones.

Furthermore, the UAE approach to aid extends beyond emergency relief to include sustainable development projects. For instance, the UAE renewable energy projects in the Pacific Island countries demonstrate its commitment to addressing global environmental challenges. These projects, including solar power installations and water desalination plants, provide immediate relief and contribute to long-term sustainability and resilience. The UAE involvement in these projects underscores its role as a responsible global actor supporting international development and environmental sustainability. These cases exemplify the UAE active engagement in global humanitarian and development efforts, reinforcing its status as a critical contributor to international aid and cooperation. To foster intellectual development and intercultural understanding, the UAE wants to establish itself as a center for information and cultural exchange.[2] To indirectly increase its soft power, the UAE intends to use its robust economy to entice talent and investments from around the globe.

The offered URL does not explicitly mention the finance index. However, it may be assumed that the UAE efficiently employs its substantial financial resources to carry out its

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[2] The UAE Cultural Diplomacy Exchange, in partnership with the UAE Embassy in Washington, DC, brings emerging leaders to the UAE for programs that deepen understanding of the Middle East. https://globally.org/

soft power strategy. This involves investing in international cooperation, cultural institutions, research and development, and worldwide humanitarian help that raises its stature and international influence. The UAE Soft Power Strategy is dedicated to enhancing its international standing and influence. The UAE wants to establish lasting bonds and promote goodwill abroad by maximizing its strengths in various fields. Many scholars study soft power strategies through political communication concepts like image creation, nation branding, and public relations (Feklyunina, 2016; Sergunin & Karabeshkin, 2015). These theories can explain some aspects of a country's soft power strategy, but not all. The fourth and dominant stream of literature examines functional or geographical aspects of the UAE soft power strategy. For instance, more studies have examined soft power strategies to influence "compatriots" in neighboring countries (Kim et al., 2016; Sergunin, 2015).

The final group consists of relatively few works (Dolinsky, 2013; Kudors, 2010; Sergunin, & Karabeshkin, 2015) that make an effort to provide a thorough analysis of the soft power strategy by tying together theoretical and applied elements of this strategy from the past and present with the study of specific instruments, methods, and mechanisms of foreign policy. According to the bulk of studies in this field (Osipova, 2014), public diplomacy is a term that is frequently used to refer to soft power strategies of other countries. Public diplomacy is a tactical strategy acknowledging the importance of popular sentiment and participation in international affairs. By utilizing the persuasive force of ideas, values, and culture, it aims to shape perceptions, attitudes, and actions to ultimately enhance a nation's influence and reputation in the international arena. Nevertheless, the literature does not fully address the issue because certain views of soft power transcend beyond the public diplomacy conundrum. Diverging from the existing body of literature that predominantly analyzes the distinct elements of either soft or hard power in the context of the UAE international relations, this study adopts a more nuanced approach. The focus is shifted to a comprehensive examination of how the

UAE integrates and leverages its public diplomacy initiatives as a critical component of its overall soft power strategy. This approach acknowledges that the realm of soft power, particularly in the case of the UAE, cannot be fully understood or appreciated by examining it in isolation from the broader context of the nation's diplomatic efforts and international engagements.

By intertwining the concepts of public diplomacy and soft power, this analysis seeks to provide a more holistic understanding of the UAE strategy in the international arena. It delves into how the UAE public diplomacy actions, such as cultural exchanges, humanitarian aid, and international partnerships, contribute significantly to building and enhancing its soft power. This perspective offers a more integrated view, considering both the overt and subtle elements of the UAE international relations strategy.

This study bridges the gap in the existing literature by illustrating how the UAE public diplomacy is not just a parallel track but a vital component that enriches and bolsters its soft power. This approach provides a deeper insight into how the UAE unique blend of diplomacy, cultural influence, and international cooperation work to shape its image and influence on the global stage, thereby highlighting its soft power strategy's intricate and dynamic nature.

According to Joseph Nye (2004), "a country may achieve the results it desires in international politics because other nations aspire to its level of affluence and openness while appreciating its ideals and imitating it" (Soft Power is seen to be the tool to be succeeded in world politics). Public diplomacy's long history is further defined by its contribution to the cold war's victory. The fight against transnational terrorism sought to win hearts by making significant contributions against the existing overreliance on success (Krzyzaniak, 2018). Modern terminology refers to soft power as the capacity of states to exert influence over others without resorting to violence or threats. To use this ability to influence other countries, developed nations have worked incredibly hard to improve their soft power methods. In the

UAE, the academic study of applied soft power is still considered to be in its infancy. But maintaining the UAE position on the world stage still depends heavily on its soft power initiatives. To create a soft power plan, objectives, and prerequisites must be defined.

Proponents of public diplomacy and soft power emphasize its impact on international politics. In modern international relations, it is defined as the ability to entice others to achieve goals rather than using inflexible political techniques (Fan, 2008). Due to the rapidly shifting internal and external dynamics in the UAE, there are a number of aspects that need to be taken into account. Tim Stickings said that The UAE is ranked first in the Middle East and 10 overall in the Global Soft-Power Index 2023 and this accomplishment encourages hope and reflection. Krzymowski (2022) makes a pertinent point regarding the importance of people and their intrinsic qualities of soft power. As a key component of its soft power strategy, the UAE makes use of overseas aid, helping to advance the SDGs in the process. This study provides a framework in which the individuals that make up the UAE fundamentally influence the UAE soft power strategy. The UAE desire to present a positive image abroad aligns with the ideals and standards promoted through its foreign assistance. In addition, Krzyzaniak's (2018) investigation of the soft power strategy of soccer sponsorships offers an intriguing viewpoint on the second pillar, media and communication. In the case of the UAE, this might take the form of sponsorships in various fields, such as sports, culture, or academics, to strengthen the country's reputation and raise its soft power rating. The UAE should use traditional and digital media strategies to reach both internal and overseas audiences, as Matheson (2020) stated, considering the country's embrace of digital tools.

Saberi et al. (2018) who contributed to tourism and the film sector to place branding and soft power in the UAE support this evidence. The study demonstrates how industries like these are effective vehicles for displaying the country's cultural diversity, which is consistent with the UAE extensive nation-branding initiative. Similar to this, Nisbett's work from 2021

challenges the marketability of soft power. Nisbett argues that something can be purchased while emphasizing the value of genuine cultural and ideological appeal in addition to financial clout. Even while it has nothing to do with the UAE specifically, the study provides insight into how governance, if not handled effectively, impairs the efficacy of soft power measures. The final thing to consider is merging knowledge from numerous industries and tactics into a broad soft power strategy and international relations. The merging of knowledge from various industries and tactics into a comprehensive soft power strategy is crucial. This interdisciplinary approach is paramount as it aligns with the principle of holistic international relations, recognizing that soft power extends beyond traditional diplomatic practices. For the UAE, incorporating elements from sectors like culture, economics, technology, and humanitarian aid into its soft power strategy diversifies its international influence. It enhances its adaptability and effectiveness in global affairs. This integration supports the principal theory of 'Complex Interdependence' in international relations, which argues that states are interconnected through multiple channels, including informal ties and international organizations, and not just through military and economic might. By embracing this multifaceted approach, the UAE soft power strategy reflects its diverse strengths and capabilities, positioning it as a dynamic and influential player on the global stage. This comprehensive strategy contributes to a more nuanced understanding of international relations. It underscores the evolving nature of soft power in contemporary geopolitics, especially for a rapidly developing nation like the UAE.

1.2   Diplomacy and Public diplomacy

International diplomacy, especially soft power strategies, has changed. In "Soft Power and Public Diplomacy Revisited," Nye (2019) defines *soft power* as a nation's ability to persuade others without force. In recent decades, public diplomacy has emphasized this aspect of diplomacy. Snow's "Rethinking Public Diplomacy in the 2020s" examines how nations

interact with each other and non-state actors and how paradigms are changing. The UAE is an excellent example of how public diplomacy affects soft power strategies.

The UAE approach to public diplomacy is multifaceted, integrating traditional and modern elements to enhance its global presence and influence. Mueller (2020), in "The Nexus of US Public Diplomacy and Citizen Diplomacy," highlights the importance of engaging with state actors, citizens, and non-state entities. This approach resonates with the UAE strategy, where cultural exchanges, investment in international educational institutions, and active participation in global forums stand out. These initiatives build a positive image and foster goodwill, which is essential to soft power.

Additionally, Armstrong (2020), in "Operationalizing Public Diplomacy," provides insights into how public diplomacy can be effectively implemented. The UAE strategy aligns with these insights, as seen in its proactive approach to humanitarian aid, cultural festivals, and international collaborations. For example, the UAE response to global crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrated its commitment to international welfare and enhanced its reputation as a responsible global actor. Such actions reinforce the UAE soft power by displaying its ability to contribute positively to global challenges.

The UAE investment in world-class infrastructure and tourism and its hosting of international events, such as the Dubai Expo 2020, also play a significant role in its public diplomacy. These initiatives boost economic growth and serve as platforms for cultural exchange and international collaboration, critical aspects of soft power (Nye, 2019). The UAE strengthens its international relations and enhances its soft power by creating a space where people from various cultures interact.

Furthermore, the UAE approach to public diplomacy is characterized by its emphasis on tolerance and cultural diversity. The importance of inclusivity and cultural exchange in modern public diplomacy (Snow, 2020). The UAE policies that encourage a melting pot of

nationalities and cultures within its borders testify to its commitment to these values. This inclusivity enriches the domestic culture and portrays the UAE as a progressive and welcoming nation on the international stage.

In addition, the UAE focuses on technological advancements and innovation, as part of its public diplomacy. Mueller (2020) emphasis the need for contemporary diplomacy to embrace new technologies. The UAE investments in renewable energy, space exploration, and digital transformation make it a forward-thinking nation, contributing to its soft power.

Moreover, Armstrong 2020) depicted the operational aspects of public diplomacy sheds light on the need for strategic communication and branding. The UAE branding as a luxury travel destination and a hub for business and innovation is a direct outcome of well-executed public diplomacy strategies. This branding attracts tourists and investors and enhances the country's global image and influence. The complexities and nuances of this approach, make the UAE a pertinent case study in the field of international diplomacy (Armstrong, 2020). Through its strategic use of public diplomacy, the UAE fortifies its position on the world stage and contributes to the evolving landscape of global interactions.

Public diplomacy examines how public perceptions affect how foreign policies are developed and carried out. Beyond conventional diplomacy, international relations include the UAE government's shaping of public opinion, private groups and interests in one country interacting with those in another, and the transnational flow of information and ideas (Gilboa, 2008). According to official attempts occasionally, but not always, to distinguish between the two, public diplomacy always works with "the known facts," whereas "propaganda" is frequently based on some combination of lies and untruths mixed in with facts. Often referred to as "people's diplomacy," this term describes several government-sponsored programs that aim to actively engage the public abroad (Wolf & Rosen, 2004). Additionally, all official efforts to persuade particular groups within the international community to agree with or

tolerate governmental strategic objectives are referred to as public diplomacy. Official statements, purposeful public diplomacy activities carried out by government agencies, and efforts to persuade international media to favorably portray official policies to foreign audiences are examples of methods (Melissen, 2005). There are essentially two categories of public diplomacy.

(i) Branding, usually referred to as cultural communication, is the first type of public diplomacy in which the government works to improve its reputation without immediately advancing any policy aims. For the UAE, nation branding has been a core part of their international strategy, and there are several prominent examples as the UAE, particularly Dubai, has become synonymous with luxury tourism, thanks to its extravagant hotels such as the Burj Al Arab and the Atlantis, as well as its high-end shopping malls. Landmark buildings such as the Burj Khalifa and the Palm Jumeirah have become symbols of the UAE worldwide. Similarly, in Abu Dhabi, the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and the Louvre Abu[3] Dhabi have helped to brand the emirate as a cultural destination. Nations use branding techniques to enhance how the rest of the world sees them. In a perfect world, branding would promote consensus on a variety of topics and increase public goodwill. Long-term alliances are also maintained, and propaganda from the opposition is rebutted. For instance, during the Cold War, the US used public diplomacy[4] to persuade European audiences that the USSR's (USSR) governing principles were inferior and that the US should embrace democracy and capitalism instead. The television show Voice of America broadcast directly into the Warsaw Pact nations of Eastern Europe to dispel myths about the West. At the same time,

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[3] *Burj Khalifa:* The tallest building in the world, located in Dubai, symbolizes the UAE architectural innovation and economic growth. *Palm Jumeirah:* A man-made island in Dubai known for its palm tree shape, luxury hotels, and posh living, showcasing engineering ingenuity. *Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque:* Located in Abu Dhabi, this mosque is celebrated for its stunning architecture and is one of the world's largest, reflecting Islamic culture and art. *Louvre Abu Dhabi:* An art and civilization museum in Abu Dhabi, symbolizing cultural exchange and collaboration between the UAE and France.

[4] Public diplomacy refers to a country's strategic use of communication, cultural exchanges, and engagement with foreign publics to influence international perception and relationships, often to support political and diplomatic goals.

the American State Department built and maintained libraries in Allied countries that were filled with volumes about American history and culture. In order to boost public support for American programs, the agency believed that people should be exposed to American ideals and concepts.

(ii) Public advocacy, the second type of public diplomacy, entails a range of strategies designed to encourage more rapid results. Public advocacy, often driven by NGOs, individual activists, or community groups, involves promoting or defending a cause or proposal. It encompasses lobbying, public speaking, research, and community organization. For example, the UAE has made significant strides in advocating for gender equality. For instance, the UAE Gender Balance Council was established in 2015 to reduce the gender gap and enhance the UAE reputation in global gender indicators. Also, the government mandated that women should make up at least 50% of the Federal National Council, the UAE parliamentary body. While branding aims to affect long-term perceptions, political advocacy campaigns use public diplomacy to encourage international support for immediate policy goals. Foreign publics may be persuaded to applaud or denounce their leaders. Nations occasionally need to quickly persuade foreign audiences to support some expensive initiatives. For example, the UAE has embarked on several large-scale, expensive domestic and international initiatives. The UAE has invested heavily in ambitious infrastructure projects, including constructing the Burj Khalifa, the world is tallest building, and developing the world's largest solar power plant, the Noor Abu Dhabi. The UAE is one of the world's largest foreign aid donors relative to its GDP. The country provides aid for humanitarian initiatives worldwide, focusing on the health, education, and infrastructure sectors. For example, the UAE has provided significant aid to Yemen, Syria, and other countries affected by conflict and humanitarian crises. While foreign leaders may want to support the goals of the alliance, they may be concerned about domestic backlash

if they agree to unpopular measures. Public diplomacy can encourage such leaders to cooperate in these situations by reducing the possibility of internal backlash.

Public diplomacy is without a doubt one of the most crucial soft power tools, and this was recognized in diplomatic practice even before the present public diplomacy debate. According to Cooper (1997) Diplomacy Middle Powers after the Cold War, the three Cold War superpowers of the former Soviet Union, the United States, and Europe heavily invested in their "communications with the world" during that time. It became more challenging to see how the former could be successful without giving the latter enough attention, even while traditional diplomatic action and public diplomacy were typically undertaken in tandem. In fact, Wilson and Lenin had already competed in soft power in 1917–1918, long before their countries became global superpowers and started to combat in the military and economy[5]. The historical instance of Wilson and Lenin engaging in a soft power struggle in 1917–1918 offers insightful parallels to the contemporary strategies employed by the UAE . This early example of soft power competition, occurring before the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as global superpowers with extensive military and economic might, underscores the longstanding significance of non-coercive influence in international relations. Like these historical precedents, the UAE has adeptly realized the potential of public diplomacy as a vital component of its soft power strategy. Rather than relying solely on military or economic advantage, the UAE has focused on cultivating a positive international image through cultural diplomacy, humanitarian efforts, and fostering global partnerships. This approach mirrors the early soft power contests, emphasizing the effectiveness of cultural and ideological appeal over traditional brutal power tactics. The UAE strategy demonstrates a sophisticated understanding

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[5] The concurrent execution of traditional diplomatic actions and public diplomacy efforts highlights their interconnected nature in international relations. The reference to Wilson and Lenin competing in soft power during 1917–1918 signifies the early use of influence and persuasion before their nations emerged as global superpowers engaging in military and economic competition.

of soft power's role in shaping global perceptions and alliances, a lesson that finds its roots in the early 20th-century international political landscape.

Contrary to popular belief, the conflict over hard power was caused by a clash of ideas and values that dominated international affairs in the second half of the 20th century. Unlike the then-standard international conversation with foreign governments, diplomats only recently realized the basic challenges of communicating with foreign publics (Chong, 2005). Realist diplomatic thinking stems from a long history of viewing international relations in terms of economic and military power. The culture of diplomacy is peer-oriented. Diplomats' adaptability is tested by how foreign ministries can use soft power.

Indeed, public diplomacy ought to be developed in line with long-term and mid-term aims rather than independently of a country's foreign policy. Public diplomacy typically functions best with a lengthy time horizon and thrives on credibility and trust. However, it is a realistic objective to try to alter the psychological and political components that make up the environment in which people discuss their attitudes and foreign policy. However, the overarching goals of public diplomacy should not be confused with those of international lobbying. The latter aims to have a direct impact on particular policies, and lobbying is always directed at individuals who are involved in the process of deciding what policies to adopt.

Contrarily, public diplomacy has its limitations, and when it tries to bridge cultural gaps, the argument for setting modest aims is strengthened. When bilateral ties are hampered by a cultural divide between the civil populations engaged, it will be more challenging for diplomats to pinpoint the appropriate interlocutors and adopt the appropriate tone. Making sure that information is understood as intended presents a second challenge, which is challenging given that people frequently have questions about the motives of foreign leaders. People have the right to ridicule anyone who has faith in the representatives of their own government in a far too large number of civilizations (Jan Melissen, The New Public Diplomacy Soft Power in

International Relations)[6]. In order to establish the trust required to facilitate international relations, ambassadors must work harder when interacting with the general people. This is true in countries where citizens lack confidence in their government, but diplomats are also aware that in stable democracies they may not always be the most effective communicators.

1.3   Public Policy and Four-Fold Objectives

The public diplomacy plan is built on four main objectives. The first objective is to chart a distinctive route for a novel strategy for economies, humanities, tourism, media, and science. The second objective chosen is to improve a country's standing as a regional entrance point. The third objective is to identify a country as the regional epicenter of culture and the arts. The fourth objective is to promote a country's image as a progressive, tolerant location that can embrace a country's public diplomacy framework (Abdi et al., 2019). To strengthen the UAE soft powers, the country has prioritized a number of pillars, such as cultural and media diplomacy, economic diplomacy, people diplomacy, scientific and intellectual diplomacy, and diplomacy by national representatives (Al-Rawi, 2021). This has allowed various forms of public diplomacy to adapt to better methods of combining better public policies (Alzaabi, 2019). The authors present a nuanced view of the UAE public diplomacy strategy in the provided text. They recognize the country's efforts in shaping a unique path integrating economic, cultural, and scientific domains as part of its international identity. The strategy is a deliberate effort to establish the UAE as a regional leader and a global hub for culture and the arts. Furthermore, they highlight the UAE commitment to presenting itself as a progressive and tolerant nation, acknowledging the effectiveness of its diplomacy in aligning with these ideals. This approach underscores the adaptability and sophistication of the UAE diplomacy in enhancing its soft power and international standing.

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[6] The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations" is a pivotal work that examines the role of soft power in diplomacy, focusing on how countries influence global affairs through cultural and ideological appeal rather than coercion.

In the past ten years, a comprehensive trend has arisen among emerging nations on the global stage. These are the economic and freedom strategies for socioeconomic conditions that are based on oil. In terms of economic freedom and overall conditions, the UAE is ranked higher. The UAE has the greatest soft power ranking in the middle east area being a score of overall Index (48.4 out of 100) moving up one spot to number 17 globally until it reached to 10. These are worried about adopting a suitable method for capital as well as a commercial hub within the institutionalized governance.

Public governance of a country's governmental decision-making and implementation can affect soft power and international relations. The UAE government structure has boosted and harmed its soft power and international stature. The UAE strong economy and competent government have boosted its soft power. It has diversified its economy, investing in tourism, real estate, and renewable energy. The UAE soft power comes from its dedication to world-class infrastructure and innovation, which attracts businesses and visitors. The UAE has promoted cultural diplomacy by creating cultural institutions like the Louvre Abu Dhabi[7] and hosting international events like the Dubai Expo 2022[8] (See Figure 1.1). These activities have strengthened UAE soft power by promoting a favorable image abroad. The UAE focus on gender equality in government, as demonstrated in the mandated participation of women in the Federal National Council and the Gender Balance Council[9] has also raised its international profile. However, the UAE's governance model supports a strategic approach to soft power by leveraging its cultural diplomacy, global partnerships, and modern media platforms. While there are areas for further enhancement, such as expanding the diversity of narratives and increasing engagement across digital channels, the country continues to build on its strengths

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[7] The "Louvre Abu Dhabi" is an art and civilization museum in Abu Dhabi, UAE, notable for its architectural design by Jean Nouvel and as a symbol of cultural collaboration between the UAE and France.

[8] Dubai Expo 2020, rescheduled to 2021-2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was a World Expo hosted by Dubai, UAE, showcasing global innovations and fostering international collaboration in various fields. https://www.expo2020dubai.com/

[9] The "Gender Balance Council" is a federal entity in the United Arab Emirates, established in 2015 to advance gender equality across various sectors, aimed at reducing gender gaps, improving global competitiveness in gender equality, and promoting the UAE as a model for gender balance legislation.

in promoting national identity and regional influence. The UAE upholds freedom of speech within a governance framework that prioritizes social cohesion, national security, and respect for cultural values—creating space for constructive public dialogue that aligns with its long-term vision for stability and progress.

The UAE emphasis on gender equality in governance, mainly through including women in the Federal National Council and establishing the Gender Balance Council, represents a significant aspect of its public diplomacy strategy. This focus is strategically enhancing the UAE international profile, displaying its commitment to progressive values. However, despite these efforts, the UAE's governing approach has sometimes been met with differing international perceptions, possibly due to varying cultural and political expectations. As the UAE continues to strengthen its soft power strategy, it remains essential to communicate its achievements and ongoing initiatives—particularly in areas such as gender equality, governance, and cultural diplomacy. Enhancing transparency, fostering inclusive dialogue, and highlighting the country's commitment to progress within its unique governance model will further reinforce its role as a leading and respected global player.

Figure 1.1: Louvre Abu Dhabi

1.4   Research Gaps and Problem statement

Public diplomacy vulnerability to foreign policy's fluctuations, inconsistencies, and fleeting trends is a major drawback (Dubinsky, 2019; Islam, 2021; Lee, 2021). Public

diplomacy can fail if it is too closely aligned with foreign policy goals, especially if they fail. In such cases, the foreign ministry's public diplomacy loses its ability to reach beyond traditional diplomatic efforts. Remember that government actions usually have little impact on other societies. The fact that public diplomacy encompasses some issues that frequently suggest different - if not competing - goals and purposes makes it difficult to assess its place within the shifting frameworks of global politics. Understanding this makes it easier to clarify the origins of public diplomacy techniques as well as the reasons why practitioners' hopes may sometimes be dashed. The idea that there is or should be a connection between the general public and the conduct of diplomacy encompasses unique components (Dubinsky, 2019; Islam, 2021). In international relations, there are many different definitions of power. In material definitions of state authority, the military and economic aspects may be highlighted. The ability to control and shape interpersonal interactions is a key component of other conceptions of power. Power is a societal process that affects actors' social identities and powers as well as the quality of participants in their interactions (Islam, 2021; Lee, 2021).

Academics studying international relations refer to polarity as the distribution of power in the international system. Despite the fact that there is no agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a powerful state, those that exercise significant influence within the international system are referred to as middle-powers, small-powers, great-powers, superpowers, regional-powers, or hegemons (Bae, & Lee, 2020; Dubinsky, 2019). Thus, convincing one's own citizens to seriously consider alternative perspectives remains a major challenge in public diplomacy. It is unclear how much of these efforts should be considered public diplomacy and opposed. Public diplomacy and media campaigns are used by many nations to win over stereotyped groups, from "the Arab street" and Pashto village hujras to American liberals and European anti-Semites. This ongoing conflict uses propaganda, public diplomacy, subversion, and intimidation, requiring more resources and attention. Despite numerous articles from

governments, organizations, associations of retired Foreign Service officers, journalists, and academics advocating for improved public diplomacy, there is little evidence of "other side" efforts toward "us." In the UAE, intermediate goals are prioritized (Krzyzaniak, 2018).

The direct cross-disciplinary approaches also promised more dynamism requirements with knowledge, interagency, and the collaboration within the right techniques for employing a mutual structure. Despite the assistance, it has readily become complex among diplomats due to correct answers, time-consuming thoughts, practical and noble concepts, and comprehensive discrimination (MOFAIC, 2017). It is difficult to evaluate soft power in terms of success. When a country uses economic and military force to exert influence over the decisions or goals of other political bodies, this is known as hard power. It is an aggressive form of political power that frequently uses coercion. It functions best when one political body over another that has less influence in terms of the economy and public diplomacy immediately imposes it.

The use of targeting has been a key strategy for the MOEs in determining how actions will affect the environment for guards and intelligence analysis, which can also track the progress of campaigns and guarantee that friendly forces are using the appropriate weapons and targeting technology with the intended effects. Additionally, there are numerous complex side consequences of the actions in the UAE (Kourgiotis, 2020). This has been combined with Cold War cultural exchanges to serve as an illustration for ongoing programs where UAE has connected people through the many bodies who knew the communist ways between truth and US policies based on speculation and fear. The reference to Cold War cultural exchanges in the context of the UAE public diplomacy initiatives offers a nuanced perspective on how historical strategies can inform contemporary practices. During the Cold War, cultural exchanges were a critical tool for the United States and the Soviet Union, aiming to influence foreign publics by showcasing each country's culture, values, and ideology. These exchanges were often juxtaposed between the perceived reality of life under communism and the US

policies that were sometimes based on speculation and fear-mongering about the communist threat. Drawing inspiration from this historical context, the UAE has implemented its public diplomacy programs to bridge cultural divides and challenge preconceived notions. However, the UAE approach differs significantly in its methodology and objectives. The UAE uses cultural exchanges and international forums not to propagate a narrative against a rival ideology but to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of its culture, values, and advancements. These programs are designed to connect people globally, offering insights into the rich Emirati culture and the country's progressive strides in technology, education, and sustainable development.

This strategy effectively dispels myths and misconceptions about the UAE and the broader Middle Eastern region. The UAE can present a narrative based on its actual societal achievements and ambitions by inviting people to experience Emirati culture firsthand, whether through educational exchanges, art exhibitions, or business conferences. This approach is a departure from the fear-based tactics of the Cold War era, focusing instead on building positive relationships and mutual respect through cultural understanding and cooperation.

The UAE use of public diplomacy draws from the historical playbook of cultural exchanges during the Cold War. Still, it adapts to a contemporary setting to create a positive global image and foster international partnerships. This strategy enhances the UAE soft power and contributes to a more nuanced and interconnected global community, where understanding and cooperation are prioritized over competition and suspicion. It also changes the key concepts for the surroundings for planning the experiences that might further promote diplomacy and world understanding. This is the most significant area that has posed a significant challenge for soft power and public diplomacy throughout the course of this course of action.

The concept of soft power has emerged as an essential component in scholarly and public discourse on international relations; consequently, it remains vital to academic inquiry (Beydoun & Zahawi, 2016; Dinnie, 2010). This concept is substantiated by the prominence of soft power in scholarly articles, mainstream media, and news platforms addressing global issues. Academic discussions are concentrating on soft power, which is emerging as a strategic leadership instrument. Its importance is continually escalating. Public diplomacy has a longstanding history of augmenting a government's soft power and was pivotal in concluding the Cold War.

Soft power still shapes international relations and a nation's global standing (Banks, 2011; Liu & Turner, 2018). UAE brand research has been scarce compared to other emerging nations (Saad, 2020). The UAE has abundant information, talent, and resources, but it must effectively harness and implement this potential in its foreign policy (Cho & Jeong, 2008). Understanding soft power's impact on international relations casts doubt on the UAE soft power strategy. According to Bagersh (2011), the UAE has used soft power to improve its international image. This suggests its soft power approach has room for improvement. This is important given the changing global dynamics and the rise of soft power in international relations. The UAE soft power leadership journey includes successes and challenges. To improve its soft power and maintain its regional and global standing, the UAE must adapt and evolve its strategies to global perceptions and changing international landscapes. Studies have examined the UAE soft power strategies and challenges, including those implemented by the Emirates Soft Power Council and other authorities to boost the nation's international reputation by highlighting its identity, heritage, culture, and contributions (AlKetbi, 2017; Bagersh, 2011; Drechsel, 2021; Saad, 2020). Even though people and value pillars are crucial to soft power, little research has examined citizens' views on exemplary soft power practices.

How soft power is perceived and assessed is crucial to Nye's theory. Public opinion often conflates hard and soft power and focuses on hard power in a "realistic" way (Noya, 2006). Additionally, social contexts and certain groups influence public opinion. A key component of soft power, citizen diplomacy, is measured by citizens' opinions on their nation's soft power initiatives (Magu, 2013). This research develops a sustainable soft power framework model and detailed implementation plan to address UAE soft power challenges.

By working with the people and gaining their support and attention through non-economic means, a nation can achieve a competitive advantage. Countries can build goodwill, attract public attention, and earn support from throughout the world by publicizing their social responsibilities. However, the material that is now available places little emphasis on the country's branding for its own inhabitants. For a country to have a strong brand, it must be competitive in preserving and increasing its resources and be viewed by its citizens as a place where they may pursue their interests and skills (Che-Ha, et al., 2016).

The amount of study and analysis on the foreign policies of UAE has grown during the last several years. Over the past ten years, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations has released reports on public diplomacy and soft power on an irregular basis. Additionally, the UAE consistently leads the globe in both international relations and foreign assistance giving. However, researchers have not focused enough emphasis on public diplomacy strategies to date. The relationships of public diplomacy and soft power from UAE have also been sufficiently studied, as have some of the pillars that can strengthen soft power use.

The expanding focus on the foreign policies of the UAE, particularly in public diplomacy and soft power, offers fertile ground for detailed analysis and case studies. One prominent example is the UAE handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, which serves as a case study of effective public diplomacy and the strengthening of soft power. At the onset of the

pandemic, the UAE swiftly positioned itself as a leader in global humanitarian efforts. It provided critical medical supplies and support to over 150 countries, regardless of their diplomatic or political affiliations with the UAE. This included sending ventilators, masks, and other crucial supplies to nations struggling to cope with the health crisis. Notably, the UAE also facilitated a series of international repatriation flights, helping thousands of people return to their home countries safely. These actions were widely covered in international media, displaying the UAE's commitment to global cooperation and humanitarian aid. This approach significantly enhanced the country's image on the global stage, demonstrating its ability to respond rapidly and effectively to international crises.

In addition to its emergency response, the UAE's approach to vaccine diplomacy further exemplified its effective use of public diplomacy. The UAE was among the first countries to offer free COVID-19 vaccinations to its citizens, residents, diplomats, and foreign nationals. It also engaged in partnerships for vaccine trials and distribution, collaborating with other countries and international organizations. This initiative bolstered the global fight against the pandemic and positioned the UAE as a responsible and proactive global actor. By prioritizing health and safety without discrimination, the UAE demonstrated its commitment to global well-being, a core aspect of soft power.

Furthermore, the UAE success in handling the pandemic domestically and its international aid efforts reinforced its status as a leader in crisis management and public health. The country's advanced healthcare infrastructure, transparent communication strategies, and effective implementation of safety measures were highlighted globally. These actions protected its population and attracted international praise and recognition. Therefore, the UAE pandemic response serves as a potent case study illustrating how public diplomacy and soft power can be effectively harnessed to enhance a country's international reputation and influence while contributing positively to global challenges.

As a result, the work that has been provided is a creative investigation and contribution to the advancement of research including new variables. This important association is included in this study as a complement to earlier research. Numerous studies have looked at some of these pillars, like Almatrooshi (2019), who looked into how the UAE foreign policy affected the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The study by Lootah (2019) also took this course. The incentives for getting active in humanitarian relief were discussed by Cochrane in 2021. In terms of foreign aid, Forrey (2020) demonstrated the historical progress of the UAE. Gökalp (2020) placed a strong emphasis on humanitarian diplomacy in his study. However, in their study, Saberi et al. (2018) examined UAE soft power. The impact of public diplomacy (humanitarian aid, economic diplomacy, academic diplomacy, commerce and trade, governance, education and science, and people and values) on international relations was not, however, identified. Hence, there is a need to conduct a study identifying the relationship between these variables.

Undoubtedly, older methods of foreign policy and diplomatic relations are no longer effective because of the evolving nature of global power. With a foreign policy focus, economic diplomacy, humanitarian aid, commerce and trade, governance, academic diplomacy, education and science, and people and values and how these nations govern their countries, exploring prominent nations' activities in soft power from a viewpoint related to historical and contemporary ones is a primary topic by analyzing works of literature where countries have effectively utilized soft-power methods reveals how the used components and practices ultimately led to the fall of these states or administrations. Hence, it is essential to conduct further investigations.

It is a fact that public diplomacy goes beyond merely informing in the sense of giving objective, (neutral) knowledge and is primarily defined by its (intentionality), or its attempt to persuade. When someone is being persuaded, their perspective on the world's events must be

expanded or changed. The goal of persuasion is to get the other person to embrace the communicator's suggested attitudes and behavioral patterns. Persuasion is "a complex continuous interactive process" (Vreg, 2000). Contrarily, lack of soft power misappropriates the interdependence, dependency, and reciprocity model of persuasive communication to offer what appears to be equal, bilateral communication and satisfaction of the needs and interests of the public (Vreg, 2000). In addition, propaganda is one-sided, frequently half-true communication used to influence public opinion (Grunig, 1993). Numerous authors continue to issue warnings about the interdependence of the actual processes. According to Kunczik (2003), the terms public diplomacy, propaganda, public relations, and media & communication interact semantically in this situation. According to Tuch (1990), the term "propaganda" would be used in its original definition, devoid of the numerous historically conditioned negative connotations. In a similar vein, Vreg (2000) concludes that every kind of communicative persuasion incorporates elements of political instability, which a negative connotation and is therefore associated with deceit and misleading arguments.

It is crucial to emphasize that public diplomacy implementation is studied within the so-called media and communication framework, as defined by Vreg (2000): national states' communications affect relevant behaviors of citizens of other nations and countries politically. Since public diplomacy primarily makes use of so-called soft power, the ability to achieve desired foreign policy goals through the development of the attractiveness of the politics, persuasion, and setting media-public agenda with the intent of changing other countries' preferences, their agreeing as well as following with the desired activities is therefore in principle excluded.

Public diplomacy and soft power have been studied together. Previous research has not focused on moderating and mediating factor effects. They also focused on direct relationships without considering international relations. Thus, variable mediation and moderation are

crucial. This use enhances the study. This study identified media and communication roles in public diplomacy and soft power relationships. The impact of public diplomacy on soft power's international relations is also examined.

Accordingly, this study aims at investigating the impact of public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view. UAE, incorporating the views of UAE citizens is vital for a comprehensive understanding of its soft power dynamics. The citizens' perspectives offer unique insights into how the nation's foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid are perceived domestically, shaping the authenticity and effectiveness of the UAE public diplomacy initiatives. As the primary beneficiaries and participants in these policies, UAE citizens' attitudes and beliefs reflect the success and credibility of their government's strategies. Their support and endorsement of the UAE international actions are crucial in projecting a unified and positive image, enhancing soft power.

Moreover, the perspectives of UAE citizens are instrumental in understanding the cultural and social dimensions of the UAE soft power. Public diplomacy is not just about governmental actions; it encompasses the cultural, social, and human elements that define a nation's global appeal. Citizens, through their interactions, cultural exports, and representation of national values, play a pivotal role in shaping the perception of the UAE on the world stage. Their views provide insights into how effectively the UAE culture, traditions, and modern achievements resonate with global audiences. Understanding how UAE citizens view their nation's role in the world, its foreign policy decisions, and their impact helps assess the alignment of the UAE public diplomacy efforts with its cultural identity and values. This alignment is critical for attracting other nations and people, ensuring the soft power exerted is genuine, relatable, and sustainable. Thus, including UAE citizens' perspectives is beneficial and essential for a holistic analysis of the UAE soft power and its impact on international

relations. It also aims to examine the moderating role of media and communication on public

diplomacy and soft power relationship based on the UAE citizens' view. Then, the current

research examines the soft power effect with the following dimensions (governance, people &

value, communication and media) being a mediator on international relations. Finally, the study

develops a model by developing the research hypotheses:

1.5   Research Model

Based on the provided hypotheses (Figure 1.2), the goal of this research is to explore

the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power, as well as the impact of these

variables on international relations from the perspective of UAE citizens. Including UAE

citizens in research exploring the relationship between public diplomacy, soft power, and

international relations is essential for several reasons. Firstly, UAE citizens embody the nation's

culture and values, core components of its soft power. Their everyday practices, cultural

expressions, and social norms provide a living narrative of the UAE identity. This narrative is

crucial in public diplomacy as it authenticates the country's external communications and

cultural exchanges. Furthermore, the citizens' experiences and perceptions of their country's

foreign policy and international engagements directly influence the credibility and

effectiveness of the UAE soft power. When UAE citizens understand and support their

country's diplomatic endeavors, they actively reinforce its positive image globally.

Secondly, UAE citizens act as informal ambassadors through their global interactions

whether in business, education, or tourism. Their direct engagement with people from other

nations contributes significantly to the UAE public diplomacy efforts. These personal

interactions often leave lasting impressions, shaping the foreign public's perceptions more

profoundly than formal diplomatic channels. Moreover, in an increasingly interconnected

world, the opinions and attitudes of a nation's citizenry are often amplified through social media

and digital platforms, further influencing international perceptions. By examining how UAE citizens view their country's role on the international stage and how they perceive the impact of public diplomacy and soft power, researchers can gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of these strategies. Such insights can guide refining policies and initiatives to ensure they resonate authentically domestically and internationally, enhancing the UAE influence and standing in global affairs. In order to study these relationships, a research model could be developed with a set of dependent, independent, and mediating variables.

1. Independent Variables: The components of public diplomacy identified in this study - foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid.

2. Mediating Variables: Elements of soft power, including governance, people and values

3. Dependent Variable: Soft power and international relations.

H1.1 through H1.4 posit a significant relationship between each component of public diplomacy and soft power based on the perspective of UAE citizens. This suggests that how a country formulates its foreign policy, cooperates internationally, demonstrates leadership, and extends economic aids can significantly influence its soft power, including governance practices, societal values, and communication strategies. H2 proposes a moderating effect of media and communication on the relationship between public diplomacy and certain aspects of soft power, specifically governance and people & values. In other words, the media and communication strategies of a country might change the strength or direction of the relationship between its public diplomacy and its governance/people & values.

UAE citizens perceive a strong link between public diplomacy and international relations, according to hypotheses H3–H3.4. This suggests that citizens believe their country's foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid affect global relations. H4 also claims that soft power mediates public diplomacy and international relations for UAE

citizens. This suggests that soft power influences public diplomacy's impact on international relations. Thus, the research model examines the dynamic relationship between public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations from UAE citizens' perspectives, considering soft power's mediating role and media and communication's moderating influence. This model provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing how diplomatic efforts and soft power affect its international status.
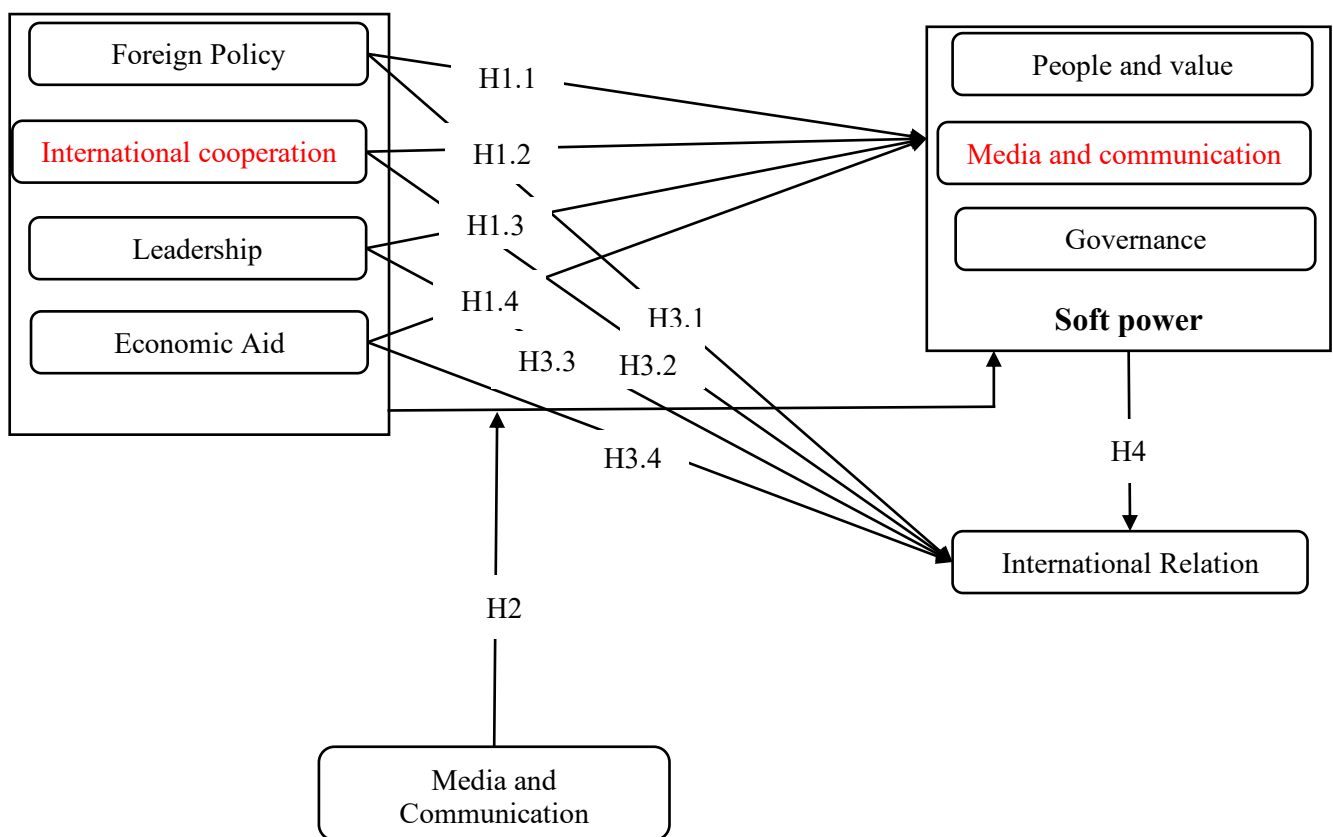
Figure 1.2 Study Model (Source: Researcher)

1.6   Research Hypotheses

The study sought to establish whether citizens evaluate the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power as well as the moderating role of media and communication on the relationship both domestically and abroad. In the context of soft power and international relations, the role of both traditional and modern media cannot be overstated. Media and communication are essential in influencing perceptions, shaping public opinion, and promoting

a nation's culture, values, and policies to domestic and foreign audiences. Governments to protect their national image, cultural values, and foreign policy objectives have long used traditional media platforms, such as TV and radio. For instance, the UAE has successfully utilized television and radio channels to promote Emirati culture and its national vision. State-run news outlets like the Emirates News Agency (WAM) regularly disseminate information about the UAE activities, achievements, and initiatives domestically and internationally.

On the other hand, the emergence of digital technology and social media platforms has revolutionized how nations exercise their soft power. These platforms offer unparalleled reach, allowing messages to be delivered to a global audience instantly. They also enable interactive communication, fostering a sense of connection and engagement between nations and their global audience. In the UAE, the government has recognized the immense potential of these platforms and integrated them into their communication strategies. The government's active presence on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube has helped them reach a wider audience[10] For example, through its #YearOfTolerance campaign in 2019; the UAE effectively used social media to promote its values of acceptance and inclusivity globally. The UAE strategic use of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube demonstrates a modern approach to public diplomacy. The UAE government effectively broadens its outreach by leveraging these digital channels, engaging with diverse global audiences. This digital diplomacy enhances transparency and accessibility, allowing for more direct communication and interaction with citizens and the international community. It also reflects the UAE adaptation to contemporary communication trends, aligning with the digitalization of diplomacy worldwide. This integration of social media into their communication strategies is a testament to the UAE understanding of the importance of digital platforms in shaping public opinion and international relations in the 21st century. Moreover,

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[10] The UAE government's adoption of social media platforms for its communication strategies significantly enhances its public diplomacy reach and engagement, aligning with modern digital trends.

the UAE has also been proactive in leveraging the power of digital diplomacy. The country has used e-diplomacy tools for public diplomacy, crisis management, consular services and communication, and international broadcasting. The basic hypothesis is so stated, and the conceptual framework of this study is then presented:

1. **H1.** There is a significant relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and soft power (governance, people and values, media, communication) based on the UAE citizens' view

2. **H1.1** There is a significant relationship between foreign policy and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

3. **H1.2** there is a significant relationship between international cooperation and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

4. **H1.3** There is a significant relationship between leadership and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

5. **H1.4** There is a significant relationship between economic aid and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

6. **H2.** There is a moderating effect of media and communication on the relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and soft power (governance and people & value) based on the UAE citizens' view

7. **H3.** There is a significant relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

8. **H3.1** There is a significant relationship between foreign policy and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

9. **H3.2** there is a significant relationship between international cooperation and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

10. **H3.3** There is a significant relationship between leadership and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

11. **H3.4** There is a significant relationship between economic aid and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

12. **H4.** There is a mediating effect of soft power on the relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

1.7   Research Objectives

The following research goals are in line with the research's context: More specifically, this study aims to achieve the objectives of the study:

1. To examine the impact of public diplomacy on the soft power of the UAE and how those policies compare to those of other nations.

2. To examine the expectations for public and media diplomacy with its capacity to adapt to new challenges and the potential harm to the soft power of the UAE.

3. To examine the moderating role of media and communication on the relationship between public diplomacy and the soft power of the UAE.

4. To examine the effect of soft power as a mediating variable on the relationship between public diplomacy and international relation.

To enhance the effectiveness of UAE public diplomacy, a multifaceted approach that integrates both modern and traditional elements is essential. One key area of focus should be cultural diplomacy. With its rich cultural heritage and rapid modernization, the UAE is uniquely positioned to showcase a narrative of harmony

between tradition and progress. The UAE can effectively share its unique heritage and modern achievements with the world by organizing and participating in international cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and cultural exchange programs. Investing in cultural initiatives highlighting diversity and tolerance within the UAE, such as film, music, and literature, can help shape a more nuanced and positive global perception of the nation.

Secondly, the UAE should leverage digital diplomacy to extend its reach and impact. Establishing a solid digital presence is crucial in the age of social media and digital communication. This can be achieved through engaging content that showcases the UAE achievements, values, and lifestyle on various digital platforms, reaching a broader and more diverse global audience. Digital diplomacy tools facilitate two-way communication, allowing for more interactive and engaging dialogues with international audiences. Additionally, digital platforms can be utilized to counter misinformation and present accurate information about the UAE, further strengthening its image and credibility on the global stage.

Lastly, the UAE public diplomacy strategy could benefit significantly from increased citizen participation. Empowering UAE citizens to participate actively in public diplomacy can profoundly impact them. Initiatives that encourage UAE nationals to study abroad, engage in international volunteer programs, or participate in global forums can serve as platforms for cultural exchange and mutual understanding. Moreover, it can also be advantageous to harness the potential of the UAE diverse expatriate community by involving them in public diplomacy initiatives. This approach not only amplifies the reach of the UAE public diplomacy efforts but also ensures that the global narrative is multifaceted and authentic, resonating with a wide range of international audiences. Through these strategies, the UAE can further enhance its soft power and strengthen its position as a dynamic and influential player in the global arena.

These goals have considered all the critical facets of public policy as well as how the UAE cooperation with other nations affects its soft power as highlighted by previous studies e.gh., (Ibish, 2017). Additionally, it has drawn attention to significant flaws that must be fixed as part of the UAE public diplomacy plans. A relevant case study that exemplifies the UAE strategic use of public diplomacy in enhancing its soft power while considering the critical facets of public policy and international cooperation is its role in renewable energy initiatives, notably the Masdar City project. This initiative is a testament to how the UAE collaborative efforts with other nations can bolster its soft power.

Masdar City, a planned city project in Abu Dhabi, epitomizes the UAE commitment to sustainable development and renewable energy. Launched in 2006, this project is a hub for clean energy research and development and a symbol of the UAE foresight and innovation in addressing global environmental challenges. The city is designed to be a sustainable, zero-carbon, and zero-waste ecology, incorporating state-of-the-art technologies in renewable energy and sustainable urban planning. The UAE investment in this visionary project demonstrates its commitment to global environmental issues, aligning with contemporary international policy priorities.

Furthermore, Masdar City has become a platform for international collaboration in renewable energy. The UAE has partnered with various countries and global organizations to advance research and development in sustainable technologies. For instance, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) has headquarters in Masdar City, facilitating global cooperation and dialogue in renewable energy policy. These collaborations have positioned the UAE as a leader in renewable energy and enhanced its diplomatic relationships with other countries, thus augmenting its soft power.

The Masdar City project illustrates how the UAE public diplomacy, focused on sustainable development and international collaboration, has effectively enhanced its soft power. By aligning its public policy with global environmental concerns and fostering international partnerships, the UAE has successfully projected itself as a forward-thinking, responsible, and influential global actor. This case study underscores the importance of strategic public diplomacy and international cooperation in shaping a nation's soft power and international standing, as highlighted in the studies by Ibish and others. With the help of this study, a workable framework is established for developing a sustainable soft power model. As a result, this framework can assist the UAE in enhancing its soft-power strategies, including people and value, media and communication, and governance in a way that would enable it to exert influence over international relations. Gathering insights on the concept of soft power and how other affluent nations have successfully developed and leveraged it is essential for shaping such a framework. So, the following goals were defined for the proposed study:

1. To identify the impact of public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) on soft power with the following dimensions (governance, people & value, and media & communication) based on the UAE citizens' view

1.1 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (foreign policy) on soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

1.2 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (international cooperation) on soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

1.3 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (leadership) on soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

1.4 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (economic aid) on soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

2. To examine the moderating effect of media and communication on the relationship between public diplomacy with the following dimensions (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and soft power with the following dimensions (governance, media & communication, and people & value) based on the UAE citizens' view

3. To identify the impact of public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

3.1 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (foreign policy) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

3.2 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (international cooperation) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

3.3 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (leadership) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

3.4 To identify the impact of public diplomacy (economic aid) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

4. To examine the mediating effect of soft power with the following dimensions (governance, people & value, and media & communication) on the relationship between public diplomacy with the following dimensions (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid) and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view.

New and old media strategies in the case study of the UAE public diplomacy, notably with Masdar City, show that communication methods have changed and how they affect soft power. Modern public diplomacy relies on these media methods to reach a worldwide audience, shape public opinion, and build international connections.

*New Media Strategy***:** The UAE intentional use of digital platforms and social media to promote Masdar City shows its soft power strategy. The UAE actively promotes sustainable development and renewable energy worldwide through websites, social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn), and online news portals (Gharios & Yahchouchi, 2020). The UAE engages the world community and its residents directly through these digital channels to promote its successes, inventions, and contributions to global environmental concerns. Modern media offers real-time contact and involvement, which may shape views and establish partnerships in public diplomacy. Through engaging content, virtual tours, and interactive debates, the UAE showcases its leadership in renewable energy and sustainable development, boosting its soft power by appealing to global ideals.

Old Media Strategy: Traditional media, including newspapers, television, and radio, remain essential to the UAE public diplomacy efforts despite the rise of new media. These platforms target consumers who are less active online or prefer traditional media. The UAE informs a broad audience about projects like Masdar City through press releases, documentaries, and interviews with important players. Old media lends credibility and authority to digital tactics, strengthening the UAE commitment to innovation and worldwide sustainable development partnerships (Ghafar et al., 2023). The UAE can maximize its public diplomacy by catering to a wide variety of tastes with this integrated media approach. Strategic use of new and traditional media in public diplomacy boosts UAE soft power. The UAE can influence global public opinion, promote its principles, and become a thought leader in sustainable development and renewable energy by controlling the story and presenting its projects positively. This comprehensive media strategy promotes the UAE successes and objectives in the world arena, strengthening diplomatic connections and collaboration.

Masdar City shows how the UAE uses new and traditional media methods in public diplomacy, demonstrating the varied approach needed to boost soft power. The UAE improves its international status and influence by using various platforms to express its vision, successes, and contributions to global concerns, emphasizing the importance of media in international relations.

1.8   Significant contribution of the study

Numerous studies have demonstrated the importance of public diplomacy's various facets in determining a nation's soft power. Abdi et al. (2019) emphasize how using sports diplomacy as a strategy for international collaboration can help build soft power. It has been well established that communication and the media have a moderating role in the interaction between soft power and public diplomacy. For instance, Albert (2018) analyzes China's significant media-based soft power bet. Alabdalkarim (2019) focuses on the branding of TV news networks and how perceptions might change, which may have an impact on how public diplomacy affects soft power. Al-Suwaidi (2019) highlights how the UAE influences international relations by using its strategic studies and research center to advise its foreign policy. Alzaabi (2019) also emphasizes how the UAE foreign policy affects its connections with other nations. As highlighted in Abdulilah & Khan (2019), leadership and international cooperation have a big impact on international relations. Almezaini (2012) examines how the UAE foreign policy, which affects its international relations, depends heavily on economic help. In her discussion of soft power and public diplomacy in East Asia, Melissen (2011) demonstrates how soft power can serve as a mediator between public diplomacy and international relations. Similarly, Antwi-Boateng and Alhashmi (2021) show how the UAE has transformed into a major global soft power, which has an impact on its diplomatic ties with other nations. According to Atkinson (2014), military educational exchanges can have a soft power effect on diplomacy and international relations. Pamment (2016) highlights the potential

importance of foreign assistance transparency as a soft power tool for managing the connection between public diplomacy and international development. By examining the intricate connections between public diplomacy, soft power, media and communication, and international affairs from the perspective of the UAE people, this study will add to the body of information already in existence. With more thorough and nuanced understandings of these ideas in the context of the UAE, policy-making and strategic planning are guided, thereby strengthening the UAE foreign relations and worldwide influence.

1.9   Definition of Study's Main Concepts

1.9.1   UAE Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy refers to the ways in which a country (in this case, the UAE) communicates with citizens in other countries. It aims to inform and influence foreign publics to promote the national interest, culture, values, and policies of the country. It includes various methods such as cultural exchanges, international broadcasting, and digital diplomacy. Public diplomacy can also be defined as the strategic management of international relations and perception by a country through engaging, informing, and influencing foreign publics. This nuanced definition extends beyond mere communication, encompassing the active shaping of a country's narrative and image on the global stage. In the context of the UAE, public diplomacy is a multifaceted endeavor that combines traditional and modern approaches to foster a positive international image and cultivate diplomatic relations. The UAE public diplomacy is characterized by its efforts to showcase its achievements, promote its culture and values, and engage in global dialogues on critical issues.

A pertinent case study that illustrates the UAE application of public diplomacy is the establishment and operation of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Inaugurated in 2017, this museum represents a significant cultural collaboration between the UAE and France. The Louvre Abu

Dhabi is not just an art museum; it is a symbol of cross-cultural exchange and understanding. Through this partnership, the UAE has effectively used cultural diplomacy, an essential aspect of public diplomacy, to project its image as a hub of cultural convergence and tolerance. The museum's diverse collection, which includes art from various regions and historical periods, reflects the UAE commitment to embracing and celebrating global cultures. This initiative has not only enhanced the cultural stature of the UAE on the world stage but also served as a platform for building and strengthening diplomatic relationships, particularly with France and other nations whose art and heritage are represented in the museum. The Louvre Abu Dhabi is a testament to how public diplomacy, through cultural initiatives, significantly affects a nation's international relations and soft power.

1.9.2   UAE Soft Powers

According to Joseph Nye[11] who first coined the term, soft power is the ability to get what the government wants through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or payment. It involves shaping the preferences of others through appeal and attraction.

- People and Value: This refers to the collective influence of the people's characteristics and the nation's inherent values. In the UAE context, the value placed on hospitality, tolerance, and progressive thought contributes significantly to its soft power.

- Media and Communication: This pertains to the strategic use of media outlets and communication channels (both traditional and modern) to project a positive image of the country, disseminate its viewpoints, and promote its culture and values.

- Governance refers to how the country is governed and its domestic and foreign policies. Effective governance, transparency, and adherence to international norms and laws can enhance a country's soft power.

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[11] Joseph Nye is an American political scientist and former Dean of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, renowned for developing the concept of "soft power" in international relations.

1.9.3   Humanitarian Action

Humanitarian action, as defined and discussed in the literature, is the organized response to address emergencies and alleviate human suffering caused by natural disasters, conflicts, and other catastrophes. Rysaback-Smith (2015), in "History and Principles of Humanitarian Action," defines it as a set of actions aimed at saving lives, alleviating suffering, and maintaining human dignity during and in the aftermath of emergencies. This encompasses various activities, including providing food, water, shelter, medical care, and mental and psychosocial support. Humanitarian action is guided by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, which are fundamental to ensuring that aid is provided solely based on need and without discrimination.

Roepstorff (2020) explores the dynamics of humanitarian action in the modern context, emphasizing the importance of localizing responses. This approach advocates for the involvement of local communities and actors in the planning and implementation of humanitarian interventions. The rationale behind this is to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of aid efforts by aligning them more closely with the specific needs and contexts of affected populations. Localization also addresses power imbalances in humanitarian aid, promoting a more participatory and inclusive approach. This perspective on humanitarian action highlights the evolving nature of the field, where traditional methods of top-down, external assistance are increasingly being complemented with or replaced by more locally driven initiatives. Rysaback-Smith's historical and moral view and Roepstorff's critical reflection on localization contribute to a comprehensive understanding of humanitarian action as a multifaceted and evolving domain that responds to human crises with efficiency, sensitivity, and respect for local contexts.

Importantly, humanitarian policies have been linked to including the essential goals of humanitarian action to save lives, relieve human suffering, and lessen the negative effects of

disasters on the economy and society (Manor and Golan, 2020). It can also identify effective themes to smooth out wrinkles between autonomous humanitarian efforts and policies with a wider scope.

The UAE has intentionally positioned itself as a significant participant in international diplomacy and aid, particularly in humanitarian disasters like Gaza. The UAE uses its resources and influence to promote goodwill and favorable perceptions worldwide as part of its soft power strategy. The UAE shows compassion and leadership by delivering humanitarian relief, sponsoring infrastructure projects, and promoting peace in Gaza, boosting its worldwide standing (Altunaiji, 2016). The UAE has provided humanitarian relief and long-term development in Gaza. The UAE has sent medical supplies and financial aid and helped reconstruct conflict-torn schools, hospitals, and homes. New and traditional media channels promote the UAE support for Palestinian communities. This strategy meets Gaza's urgent needs and shows the UAE commitment to peace, stability, and prosperity. These efforts help the UAE build soft power by portraying itself as compassionate and responsible abroad.

The UAE diplomatic initiatives, such as hosting conversations and supporting peace processes, demonstrate its strategic use of public diplomacy to boost soft power. The UAE strengthens its mediation and peacemaking role by actively engaging in international forums and cooperating with other governments and international organizations to promote peace and stability in Gaza. This posture makes the UAE prominent in Middle East geopolitics and helps Gaza handle its immediate issues. These public diplomacy activities increase the UAE soft power, showing that intelligent international involvement and humanitarian aid can boost a nation's global standing.

1.9.4 Academic Guidelines

The implementation of improved scholarship programs that foster positive ties between the UAE and other countries, as well as having a positive and better influence inside the

national frameworks utilizing education, are examples of academic policies that can be used as soft powers (Guéraiche, 2019). Additionally, it means that within structures based on policies, academic policies can be followed to develop a basis in education (Liu, & Turner, 2018). These academic policies play a crucial role as a soft policy to create a better path for the UAE to implement a better understanding.

1.9.5   Policy Statements

Public policies are seen as soft powers since governments, in reaction to public opinion, practical issues, and overarching ideas often implement them. Public policy is typically handled as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding proprieties on the specified issues that the government body or representatives can create (Kourgiotis, 2020). UAE can also set high standards for creating public policies including constituency, regulatory, and redistributive policies. These are some of the most crucial methods for offering comprehensive ideological standards that can be based on decisions made about public policy and ideologies that have been put into practice.

1.9.6   Media Guidelines

Media guidelines, particularly in organizational settings, refer to a set of policies or protocols that govern the use of media channels, especially social media, by individuals associated with the organization. These guidelines are designed to clarify acceptable practices, ethical standards, and legal considerations in using media platforms. Bennett and Manoharan (2017), in their study "The Use of Social Media Policies by US Municipalities," highlight how such guidelines are crucial for public sector organizations. They stress that media guidelines help maintain a professional image, prevent the dissemination of confidential information, and ensure that the communication aligns with the values and objectives of the organization. In the context of municipalities, these guidelines serve not only to regulate employees' online

behavior but also to enhance public engagement and trust through transparent and responsible use of media.

O'Connor, Schmidt, and Drouin (2016), in "Helping Workers Understand and Follow Social Media Policies," discuss the importance of having media guidelines and ensuring that they are effectively communicated and understood by the workforce. Their research emphasizes the need for clear, comprehensive, and accessible media guidelines that employees can easily interpret and apply in their daily interactions on social media platforms. The study underscores the importance of training and awareness programs in implementing media guidelines. These programs are essential in helping employees navigate the complexities of social media use, particularly in distinguishing between personal and professional postings, understanding the implications of sharing information online, and recognizing how their online behavior can reflect on the organization. This holistic approach to media guidelines ensures that they are not just a set of rules but a framework within which employees can responsibly and effectively engage with media in a way that supports the goals and values of the organization.

Media guidelines serve as instructions or principles that guide how media content should be produced and distributed. They are essential in maintaining specific standards and ethics in media practices.

- o People and Value: Media guidelines concerning people and values involve portraying the diversity and inclusivity of the UAE society and promoting the nation's core values like tolerance, co-existence, and respect for all cultures.

- o Media and Communication: Media guidelines in this aspect mean ensuring accurate and responsible reporting, respect for copyright laws, and abiding by the ethical standards of journalism. In the digital era, it would also involve guidelines for social media use, such as avoiding hate speech or misinformation.

o Governance: Media guidelines concerning governance could include principles for reporting on government activities, laws, and policies. It would also involve guidelines for political journalism, such as impartiality, balance, and the prohibition of publishing state secrets.

1.9.7 Security Guidelines

The protection against organizational threats allows the security policies to be modified within the boundaries (Matheson, 2020). It is manageable within the context of managing problems. Within the potential dangers to various assets, this security strategy can also identify all of the company's assets that may be potentially dangerous (Karasik, 2021). The UAE is also capable of developing a variety of policies, including those relating to administrative and technical security. These are a few of the key concepts that can be used within the traditional confirmation through rules that can be managed within the setup that people need to create within the technological requirements of security rules.

1.9.8 Policies of the National Representative

The policies of the national representative are crucial in handling all the ideas for the national interest that are contained in the policies. The policies of a National Representative are pivotal in shaping the course of a nation's domestic and international agenda. As the elected or appointed officials responsible for representing the interests and views of their constituents, these representatives play a crucial role in formulating and implementing policies that impact all aspects of national life. Their responsibilities typically encompass various areas, including legislation, diplomacy, economic development, and social welfare. The effectiveness of these policies often hinges on the representative's ability to understand and address the diverse needs of their constituents while balancing national interests. This entails deeply understanding local and national issues and navigating complex political, social, and economic landscapes.

Furthermore, the policies crafted by these representatives must align with the broader goals of the nation, ensuring that they contribute constructively to the country's growth, stability, and global standing.

In the international arena, the policies set by National Representatives are instrumental in defining a country's foreign relations and diplomatic engagements. These policies can range from establishing trade agreements and alliances to participating in international organizations and negotiations. The ability of these representatives to effectively articulate and negotiate their nation's interests on the global stage is essential for maintaining and enhancing their country's international reputation and influence. Moreover, in an increasingly interconnected world, the policies of National Representatives must also consider global issues such as climate change, human rights, and international security. Their decisions and actions in these areas affect their country and can have far-reaching implications for the global community. Thus, the role of a National Representative is multifaceted, requiring a delicate balance between addressing domestic concerns and engaging constructively in international affairs. These are helpful in understanding the good advancement that can follow the guiding principles of the necessary thoughts. Evaluation of the national representation using methods for obtaining international models and suggestions for adjusting to newer developments can be of fundamental importance (Saad, 2020). By getting the most beneficial conditional concepts, these body securities and policy ideas are helpful for addressing the indicators within the most significant policies. These can also be considered the most crucial frameworks necessary for the themes.

1.9.9 Economic Diplomacy

Utilizing all of a state's economic resources to advance its own national objectives is known as economic diplomacy (Costa, 2009). Economic diplomacy may cover all of a state's international economic activities, including but not restricted to policy decisions that have an impact on imports, exports, lending, investments, free trade agreements, aid, etc.

1.9.10 Commercial Diplomacy

The branch of diplomacy known as commercial diplomacy focuses on the expansion of trade between two or more countries (Naray, 2008). It aims to provide financial rewards through trade and inward and outward investment by fostering business and entrepreneurship in the host nation. The major goals of commercial diplomacy are welfare, economic stability, or competitive advantage.

1.9.11 Governance

The method by which an organized society exerts control over a social system through interactions with its laws, social norms, political authority, or language as it is structured in communication (family, formal/informal organizations, social group, a territory within a jurisdiction, or across territories). A market, network, or a state government could all be used to carry it out (Bevir, 2012). The establishment, reinforcement, or repetition of acceptable behavior and social order among the participants in a group problem is a result of the process of choosing the appropriate path. The political transactions that occur both outside and inside of official institutions can be summed up in one word.

1.9.12 Education and Science Diplomacy

The employment of educational and scientific cooperation between states to solve global issues and forge[12] fruitful international alliances are known as education and science diplomacy (Barston, 2019). Education and science diplomacy is a type of new diplomacy that has evolved to serve as an umbrella term for describing varieties of informal or formal technical, academic, and engineering exchanges, or research based in the broader context of international relations and the developing field of global policy making.

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[12] The act of building strong global partnerships and networks through shared scientific endeavours, contributes to international understanding and cooperation.

1.9.13 International Cooperation

International cooperation is fundamental to modern global relations, serving as the core of public diplomacy and soft power. It involves the collaborative efforts of countries to address common challenges, share knowledge, and foster mutual benefits. This cooperation can take various forms, including bilateral agreements, multilateral engagements in international organizations, joint initiatives, and cultural exchanges. For the UAE, international cooperation has been a critical element in its foreign policy, reflecting its commitment to being an active and responsible player on the global stage. The UAE approach to international cooperation is characterized by its strategic partnerships across different regions and active participation in global issues such as climate change, renewable energy, and humanitarian aid. For instance, the UAE significant investment in renewable energy projects worldwide positions it as a leader in sustainable development and strengthens its international ties and influence.

In the context of public diplomacy and soft power, international cooperation allows countries like the UAE to build and sustain positive relationships with other nations. It enhances their ability to influence global affairs not through coercion or economic might but through collaboration and mutual understanding. The UAE involvement in international forums, such as the United Nations and the Gulf Cooperation Council, exemplifies its dedication to cooperative diplomacy. Additionally, its foreign aid program is a prime example of how the UAE leverages international cooperation for soft power gains. The UAE has consistently ranked as one of the world's largest donors of official development assistance relative to its national income. This generosity not only aids recipient countries but also bolsters the UAE image as a benevolent and influential country on the world stage.

Culture, a key part of public diplomacy, involves sharing ideas, values, traditions, and other cultural elements between nations and their peoples to foster understanding and respect. This approach helps nations build connections and soft power by presenting a positive and

appealing image to foreign audiences and governments. The UAE has promoted its rich heritage and modern culture through cultural diplomacy. The Louvre Abu Dhabi, built with France, is an example. It symbolizes cross-cultural understanding and collaboration, not just a museum. The UAE efforts show how culture can foster international dialogue and soft power, boosting its global image. International cooperation is known to be a collaborative relationship between existing entities working toward the shared goals through a mutually agreed division at the national as well as international levels (Buse & Walt, 2000).

1.9.14 Economic Aid

The unilateral resources' transfer from an economic entity known to be "the donor" to another is known as economic aid "the recipient". In addition to those, it provides the recipient with other resources (Svensson, 2000).

1.9.15 UAE Leadership

The ability of UAE rulers to inspire and influence UAE citizens through the making of wise and occasionally difficult decisions, creating and communicating a clear vision, setting achievable goals, and providing followers with the knowledge and resources they need to achieve those goals are all components of leadership. The leadership of the UAE plays a pivotal role in shaping the country's success, particularly in implementing its strategic vision and international policies. Under the guidance of its leaders, the UAE has transformed from a modest federation of emirates into a global powerhouse known for its economic dynamism, technological innovation, and influential role in international affairs. The leadership's vision has been central to this transformation, emphasizing diversification away from oil dependency, investment in infrastructure, and a focus on sustainable development. A clear example of this visionary leadership is the UAE Mars Mission under the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre. This mission, which successfully sent the Hope Probe to Mars, not only marked the UAE as

the first Arab nation to reach Mars but also symbolized the leadership's commitment to advancing scientific knowledge and inspiring a new generation in the region.

In diplomacy and international relations, UAE leadership has positioned the country as a key diplomatic player in the Middle East and beyond. The UAE diplomatic efforts, guided by tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and cooperation principles, have enabled it to build strong relationships with various countries and international organizations. An exemplary instance is the UAE role in brokering the Abraham Accords, a historic peace agreement between Israel and several Arab nations. This initiative demonstrated the UAE diplomatic acumen and its commitment to fostering peace and stability in the region. The leadership's proactive and pragmatic approach to foreign policy has earned the UAE a reputation as a mediator and a reliable partner in international affairs.

Furthermore, the UAE leadership has promoted social development and cultural enrichment. Initiatives like establishing world-class educational institutions, investing in arts and culture, and promoting women's empowerment reflect the leadership's commitment to building a progressive and inclusive society. For instance, the UAE Gender Balance Council, aimed at enhancing gender equality in all sectors, highlights the leadership's dedication to social development. These domestic achievements contribute to the nation's prosperity and enhance its international image, playing into the broader strategy of soft power. The UAE leadership's vision and policies have been critical to the nation's remarkable journey, demonstrating how effective leadership can propel a country onto the global stage, making it a model for development and diplomacy.

1.10   Methodology

According to Creswell (2014), research design refers to the several forms of inquiries that give studies using mixed, quantitative, and qualitative techniques the necessary direction for processes or procedures. The design of the research will establish its framework using a

scientific approach. The manner the research is systematized demonstrates how the investigation fits into the larger picture and provides answers to the study's questions. It outlines the necessary information, the techniques employed, and how those techniques respond to the study questions.

Expanding on the research methodology, the mixed-methods approach is particularly beneficial in exploring the intricate dynamics of public diplomacy and soft power in the context of the UAE. Through interviews and audio recordings, the qualitative component allows for an in-depth exploration of individual experiences, perceptions, and opinions. This is crucial in understanding how public diplomacy initiatives by the UAE are received and interpreted by various stakeholders, including government officials, diplomats, and citizens. These qualitative insights provide context and depth, revealing the subtleties of cultural exchanges, diplomatic communications, and international relations that pure quantitative data might overlook. They offer a narrative that complements the numerical data, enriching the understanding of the UAE soft power strategies.

On the other hand, the quantitative aspect, primarily through questionnaires, provides empirical data that is statistically analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and correlations. This data is essential in objectively assessing the impact and effectiveness of the UAE public diplomacy efforts. It allows for a broader analysis of how these efforts translate into measurable outcomes regarding changing perceptions, influencing international policy, or enhancing the UAE global image. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data, the research offers a comprehensive view of the UAE public diplomacy and its role in shaping its soft power. This holistic approach is critical in providing well-rounded insights into the complexities of international relations and the strategic use of soft power by a nation seeking to enhance its global standing and influence.

As the UAE has shown, understanding the differences and strengths of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research methodologies is essential when studying public diplomacy and soft power. Creswell (2014) defines mixed-methods research as combining qualitative and quantitative methods in one or more studies. It hypothesizes that, by integrating the two approaches, the study may offer a more thorough comprehension of research issues than it could with just one method. This methodological decision is especially appropriate for examining the public diplomacy and soft power of the UAE. Researchers can investigate the intricate dynamics of international relations by using a mixed-methods approach, which combines quantitative information on public opinion, media coverage, and diplomatic activity with qualitative insights into the attitudes, drives, and complex understandings of those involved in or affected by these activities. This is a pragmatic technique by nature, utilizing the advantages of qualitative and quantitative research to answer complicated topics that must be better suited to a single methodological approach.

Mixed-methods research on the UAE public diplomacy programs may incorporate surveys and questionnaires as part of its quantitative component to gauge overseas audiences' knowledge, perceptions, and impact of the country's soft power initiatives. These instruments can measure the effects of several tactics, such as cultural events, foreign aid, educational scholarships, and diplomatic contacts, on improving the UAE's standing overseas. Through statistical analysis, patterns and trends may be found in this data, providing unbiased proof of the scope and effectiveness of the UAE public diplomacy initiatives. For example, factor analysis might uncover underlying features of the UAE soft power appeal, while regression analysis can show how specific programs correspond with enhanced perceptions of the UAE.

The qualitative component enhances this by exploring individual perceptions and views. Interviews with diplomats, government officials, recipients of UAE aid, and participants in cultural exchange programs may provide comprehensive insights into the conception,

execution, and reception of these projects. Such narratives can reveal the cultural quirks that affect how the UAE is seen in various situations and the strategic considerations underpinning its public diplomacy initiatives. Interview transcripts can be subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and opposing viewpoints, providing a more nuanced understanding of the intricate dynamics of soft power in international affairs. The qualitative information complements the quantitative results by giving the statistical patterns context, richness, and explanations for the relative efficacy of various tactics.

The key to using a mixed methods approach effectively is combining quantitative and qualitative data for thorough conclusions. Regarding public diplomacy and soft power, the UAE may do this by contrasting quantitative data about how the world views the country with qualitative information about the views and experiences of important stakeholders. Not only can this integrated analysis determine what is happening and to what degree, but it can also determine why these trends are occurring and how various players interpret them. This integration may take many different forms. For example, qualitative and quantitative data might be collected concurrently and utilized to confirm conclusions in a process known as concurrent triangulation. An alternative approach is to use a sequential explanatory technique, in which the topic of future qualitative research is determined by the quantitative data obtained first or vice versa.

The investigation of the UAE soft power and public diplomacy with hybrid approaches has essential theoretical and practical ramifications. Theoretically, it adds to the body of knowledge on soft power and public diplomacy by offering a comprehensive perspective that considers these initiatives' quantitative effects and subjective opinions. It tests and improves upon current theories, resulting in new conceptual frameworks that more accurately capture the complexity of international relations in the twenty-first century. The results of this kind of study can guide the UAE upcoming public diplomacy initiatives. While qualitative insights can

assist in adjusting these activities better to match the requirements and expectations of foreign audiences, quantitative data can be used to assess which initiatives are most effective. The UAE soft power may be more successful with this evidence-based strategy, raising its stature and influence internationally.

A mixed-methods approach provides a thorough and sophisticated framework for examining soft power dynamics and public diplomacy, especially in the UAE. Researchers may give a more comprehensive understanding of these initiatives' conception, implementation, and reception by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. In addition to adding to the body of knowledge on public diplomacy and soft power inside academia, this strategy offers policymakers and diplomats helpful information when attempting to increase their country's influence abroad through innovative diplomatic and cultural interactions.

This research employed a mixed-methods approach. This approach combines qualitative as well as quantitative research forms (Creswell, 2014). In other words, it involves instruments from a qualitative approach such as audio recordings and interviews. In addition, a questionnaire for quantitative data collection was used. The interview and questionnaire are seen to be suitable tools that examine the effective relationship between public diplomacy and soft power. It could be logically noticed that the use of these two methods together provides a complete understanding of the current problems.

1.11 Chapter Summary

The entire effect of public diplomacy on the UAE soft power was to be constructively introduced in the present chapter. Soft power is the capacity to affect outcomes by luring in additional money. Public diplomacy is also described as having a significant winning effect. The heritage, identity, contributions, as well as culture that point to specific directions for enhancing economics, humanities, tourism, media, and science, are also a priority of the Soft

Power Strategy in UAE. The statement problem as it has been presented here relates to the complexity of growing strong with an eye toward individuality complexity. Different societal forms and levels of knowledge can be directly linked to the right answers depending on preferences and beliefs. This study's primary objectives are to identify the impact of public diplomacy (human aid, economic diplomacy, academic diplomacy, commercial diplomacy, governance, education and science, and people and values) on international relations based on the UAE citizens' view. In addition, it aims to identify the moderating role of media on such relationships.

In conclusion, public diplomacy is an instrument for attaining public policy objectives to influence UAE soft power and diplomacy on other nations and organizations in order to win them over and secure their support through a variety of techniques. Some of these are threatening and immoral while others are persuading and moral. The humanitarian issue is a particular case study that is concentrated on implementing public diplomacy as well as soft power influence in addition to information dissemination and diplomatic negotiations with governments. When pursuing its objectives, soft power emphasizes nonviolent methods as well as public diplomacy.

Additionally, the soft power idea in the aforementioned definition encompasses both the feature of owning the sources of power and the part of using these sources to constrain the UAE government. More specifically, the soft diplomacy implemented by UAE has helped to keep international crises and conflicts under control. Some of the most pressing issues about the various forms of power in international relations have been assessed in this research. The significance of soft power is growing in the contemporary environment; yet, a number of factors prevent its proper detection and use, including conceptual ambiguity, estimation difficulties, and a lack of sustainability issues as well as sufficient institutional support.

The usefulness of a smart power framework, which successfully integrates hard and soft power to exploit resources, was also covered in this chapter (Alzaabi, 2019). The final question is how and when rather than if soft and smart powers still matter today. Thus, it was suggested that education was a source of "smart" power. It was claimed that funding education is both a "hard" and a "soft" power instrument since it can affect economic growth by making more human capital available. On the subject of education as a "smart" power tool, additional theoretical and practical investigation is required.

In parallel, fostering a knowledge-based society also requires creating an environment where ideas can be exchanged freely and responsibly. In this regard, the UAE upholds freedom of speech within a framework of governance that prioritizes national unity, social stability, and security. This balanced approach allows individuals to express their views, particularly in academic, cultural, and professional settings, while ensuring that such expressions align with the country's values and legal norms. The coexistence of educational empowerment and regulated freedom of expression reflects the UAE's broader commitment to development, modernization, and strategic influence on the global stage.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL

DEVELOPMENT

## 2.1	Introduction

The impact of public democracy on soft power is discussed in this chapter. The ability to influence others by attractiveness rather than force or money is an example of soft power, and it is crucial for nations to have this ability. The soft power of a nation is comprised of its traditions, values, and legal framework. An intelligent power plan should incorporate both hard and soft power elements. It was essential to the development of many nations during or after the Cold War. We are currently fighting a war for the hearts and minds of people against international crime. Furthermore, at this time, relying too heavily on force alone is not the best way to accomplish your goals (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022). Public diplomacy is one of many diverse tools that make up soft power, and it is also one of its most crucial components. However, understanding the roles that credibility, self-criticism, and civil society play in the development of soft power is essential for effective public diplomacy.

## 2.2	Concept of Public Diplomacy

In order to influence public opinion without the people of the globe being aware of the process, which they are a part of, public diplomacy has always been present in foreign affairs as a major power of modernity (Saberi, et al 2018). However, as a result of global change processes like globalization, global security, international migration, and human security, countries today are overrun with information, public diplomacy strategies, and methods (Abdi, et al., 2019). The concept of human rights and technology has been broadened, assuming new interpretations and perspectives, and enabling the soft powers of small countries to design their own public diplomacy strategies (Kourgiotis, 2020). This led to a resurgence of public diplomacy research in academia.

Since its inception in the 1960s[13] public diplomacy has considered the participation of non-state actors in international relations, including multinational corporations, the media, academic institutions, think tanks, and even the public. In the modern era, there is a growing trend toward the privatization of international relations, the loss of State sovereignty, the expansion of international relations actors, and the shrinkage of the public sector in Western economies (Alzaabi, 2019). Polylateralism and the new public diplomacy, which emphasizes direct exchanges between public opinions from various countries without the need for governmental intervention, are two notions that have emerged recently that exemplify this trend (Al Zaabi & Awamleh, 2019). In a world characterized by unpredictability and instability, diplomacy must be fundamentally significant in the service of economic reactivation (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2021). The success of the foreign policy instruments, public diplomacy, economic diplomacy, and soft power in general, has a significant bearing on the economic and social development of that nation (Gökalp, 2020). Additionally, it is evident that to achieve the desired results, public diplomacy in small and medium-sized countries must concentrate more on a specific group of people because they lack the resources to organize a campaign for all media and the general public the way large powers can (Matheson, 2020).

Many nations successfully and effectively used public diplomacy as a tool to increase soft power. For instance, when considering the worldwide concept of public diplomacy, America is recognized as one of the first countries in the world to recognize the relevance of diplomacy. According to earlier studies, a diplomacy professor at Boston's Fletcher University used the term "public diplomacy" for the first time about fifty years ago (Abdi, et al., 2019). But it is not until the first decade of the twenty-first century that it really starts to draw attention. The September 11th events in Washington and New York served to highlight the importance of this public diplomacy (Subeh, 2017). As a result, indirect access to the internal target public

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[13] The inception of public diplomacy in the 1960s refers to the formal recognition and use of diplomatic strategies involving public communication and influence tactics beyond traditional state diplomacy.

opinion and public diplomacy usually begin to work once official declarations are over or traditional diplomacy has slowed down. Until recently, other countries, including those in Europe like France, did not use this word in their diplomatic communications and limited their operations to promoting the use of their language and participating in cultural and scientific exchanges. These actions have little bearing on world affairs (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2021).

The UAE's implementation of public diplomacy is a vivid example of how this concept works in practice, emphasizing the role of communication, cultural exchange, and international cooperation in enhancing a nation's global standing and influence. The most striking example of the UAE's public diplomacy is its investment in cultural institutions and events, such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi. This museum, a collaboration with France, serves as a cultural bridge, displaying artworks from around the world and hosting international exhibitions. This initiative promotes cultural understanding and positions the UAE as a hub of global art and culture. Similarly, the Dubai Expo 2020, an international exposition, provided another platform for the UAE to engage with the global community. It showcased the country's achievements in technology, sustainability, and innovation while providing opportunities for dialogue and collaboration with other nations and international organizations.

In addition to cultural initiatives, the UAE public diplomacy approach is evident in its foreign aid and humanitarian efforts. The UAE has been recognized as one of the world's largest donors of developmental aid relative to its gross national income. This aid, which often targets critical areas such as health, education, and disaster relief, provides tangible assistance to recipient countries and enhances the UAE reputation as a responsible and benevolent global actor. Furthermore, the UAE diplomatic efforts in fostering peace and stability, exemplified by its role in the Abraham Accords, highlight its commitment to constructive international engagement.

These instances demonstrate how the UAE effectively employs public diplomacy to create a positive international image, build cross-cultural relationships, and assert its role as an influential player in global affairs. Through these diverse initiatives, the UAE approach to public diplomacy goes beyond traditional diplomatic channels, harnessing culture, aid, and international cooperation as tools for building and projecting its soft power.

2.2.1 Public Diplomacy Dimensions

Public diplomacy is described as interactions with people and organizations that are primarily nongovernmental and that frequently present a variety of private viewpoints in addition to official viewpoints (Zaabi & Awamleh, 2019), a well-known broadcaster and former director of the USIA during the Kennedy administration (Leonard 2002). Critics who see public diplomacy as nothing more than a cover for propaganda fail to grasp the concept. Simple propaganda typically lacks credibility and fails to achieve diplomatic goals. Propaganda alone cannot achieve effective public diplomacy. Additionally, public diplomacy goes beyond standard PR initiatives. Along with providing information and promoting a positive image, public diplomacy also involves building long-lasting relationships that encourage a culture that supports governmental policies. The amount of direct government information and enduring cultural links among three important public diplomacy components varies (Leonard 2002).

The first and most important part of daily communications is to describe the context of the local and global policy options expressed in the forms of (leadership and foreign policy). In modern democracies, after decisions are made, government officials frequently put much care into what to say to the press and how to say it. They do, however, mainly follow domestic media. The international press must be a primary objective for the first stage of public diplomacy. The initial stage must include emergency response planning. Rapid response allows for the quick denial of false allegations or inaccurate information. For instance, American officials initially sought to prevent both American networks and Al Jazeera from showing more

Osama bin Laden conversations after Al Jazeera aired the first videotape of bin Laden's on October 7, 2001. However, in the information age of today, such an action is as annoying as attempting to stop the tide and not only represents the opposite of the openness that America seeks to represent. A better strategy would be to prepare to flood Al Jazeera and other networks with American voices in order to counter bin Laden's hate speech. Despite being hardly impartial, foreign networks like Al Jazeera need programming. Please come talk to us and take advantage of us, as their head of the Washington bureau put it (as quoted in Blinken, [14] 2003). German polls showed that, despite some lingering concerns about the program, two-thirds of the people supported America. George Schultz, a former secretary of state, stated without a very effective public diplomacy campaign. Because the Soviet Union made numerous attempts in 1983, including through peace movements and other initiatives, to stop our allies in Europe from deploying (Tuch, 1990).

The third aspect of public diplomacy is building long-term relationships with powerful people through grants, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences, media access, and other means. Cultural and academic exchanges with Americans have involved 700,000 people, including 200 heads of state. These educational exchanges helped Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Schmidt, and Anwar Sadat. Other nations have similar programs. Japan has a fascinating exchange program that recruits 6,000 young foreigners from 40 countries to teach Japanese in schools and maintains their bonds with an alumni club. Each of these three public diplomacy strategies makes a substantial contribution to creating a favorable image of a country that can improve its chances of success. But nothing can become popular with even the best advertising. The likelihood that a policy will be disallowed is higher than the likelihood that it will provide soft power when presented in a narrowly self-serving or arrogant manner. At most, long-standing friendly ties might persuade others to act with a little bit more tolerance. On occasion,

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[14] The 71st United States secretary of state, discusses media influence and public diplomacy.

friends will be more willing to extend forgiveness or a second chance. This describes an environment as either facilitating or disabling for policy.

The state department's poor performance was blamed on Gingrich (2003) for not promoting U.S. policies. Effective diplomacy requires careful audience consideration, so the State Department was not entirely to blame. Gingrich lamented the US' 2001 expulsion from the UN Human Rights Commission, which was caused by Congress' non-payment of UN dues and the Bush administration's unilateral actions. Despite State Department warnings, other executive departments made these decisions. Washington discussed improving public diplomacy to communicate U.S. goals after 9/11. This effort was necessary, but Republican Senator Charles Hagel warned that repackaging the message "Madison Avenue-style" would not work. He stressed the need for a consistent diplomatic strategy to avoid sending mixed signals to the world (Hagel, 2003).

Speaking and listening are both necessary for effective public diplomacy; it is a two-way process. It is important to understand that people have common values and viewpoints. Because of this, exchanges frequently outperform straightforward broadcasting. Soft power is the skill of convincing others to support your objectives, which necessitates understanding how they are being received and adjusting your messages accordingly. Declamatory words are rarely understood as intended due to cultural differences. Telling has a significantly lower impact than showing and telling through gestures and symbols. Because of this, the Bush administration's initiatives to increase development aid or combat HIV/AIDS had the potential to be big until they were buried under the weight of Iraq. It is noteworthy that helping Indonesia recover from the 2004 tsunami contributed to partially reversing the dramatic loss in American popularity that had begun after the Iraq war[15].

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[15] The Iraq War, beginning in 2003 and officially ending in 2011, was a conflict led by the United States and its allies against the regime of Saddam Hussein under the premise of eliminating weapons of mass destruction. The war significantly impacted regional stability and international relations, with long-lasting effects on global politics and security.

Essential broadcasting must be combined with internet *"narrowcasting."* The versatility and low cost of the Internet allow for targeted messaging to specific groups, even though it only reaches elites in many parts of the world where most people cannot afford a phone or computer. It also allows countries that ban traditional media to distribute information. The Internet can also be utilized in conjunction with transactions and exchanges. Even though face-to-face communication is still the most effective, online communication can supplement and strengthen it. For instance, the development of both virtual and actual networks of young people interested in learning about one another's cultures could occur through a combination of in-person contacts and internet resources. Alternatively, the US could follow Japan's lead and pay young foreigners to spend a year instructing US students in their native language and culture. After completing these courses, alumni might create online groups and maintain contact.

Some countries prefer to use direct action over broadcast to carry out the majority of their public diplomacy. This nation has a disproportionately large global voice despite having only 5 million people, no universal language or culture, few major international corporations, and not being a European Union member. This was achieved through "ruthless prioritization of its target audiences and its focus on a singular message as a force for peace in the world" (Leonard 2002, p. 53). Its aid budget, peacekeeping missions, and mediation in the Middle East, Sri Lanka, and Colombia are examples. Norway's actions aren't always interpreted the same. Environmentalists do not always agree with domestic whaling support. Additionally, language and imagery that resonate with domestic audiences may not resonate abroad. Bush's 2002 State of the Union address calling Iraq, Iran, and North Korea the "axis of evil" was well-received. International audiences did not like applying a moralistic label to diplomatic situations. Many saw this as complicating global efforts to collaborate with the U.S. in fighting terrorism, similar to the declaration of a "war on terrorism" that rallied public and congressional

support post-9/11 but raised concerns when Guantanamo detainees were held without full legal protections amid an indefinite war. The British Foreign Office banned the phrase in 2006, claiming it promoted Al Qaeda global jihad narrative (Nye 2007).

Soft power in the digital age is difficult even when policy and communications align. Today's society shares a lot of information, but government communications are a small part. Governments are distrusted in the postmodern world due to public distrust of authority. Thus, government collaboration with private entities and integration into the communication landscape can be beneficial. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are trusted more than government agencies and can be better communication channels, but managing them can be difficult. American foundations and NGOs helped Eastern Europe democratize after the Cold War. Countries with large immigrant populations, like the US and UK, can use diaspora groups to build cultural and linguistic connections. Major political parties in Germany created foundations, partly funded by public money, to form international alliances, setting a precedent for political collaboration in other nations.

The potential of American businesses is enormous. Brands and advocates influence more people than government leaders. Before sending employees abroad, many socially conscious companies advise sensitivity and communication training. A technology company's collaboration with Sesame Workshop and a Lebanese broadcaster to create an English-language children's technology program, a widely admired American achievement, shows how businesses can lead public diplomacy. Another benefit of indirect public diplomacy is its greater freedom to express diverse opinions. It might be difficult for the government to encourage the dissemination of arguments that are hostile to its own internal policy. The easiest approach to establish credibility, though, is frequently with this kind of criticism. The free press, Congress, and courts are able to criticize and amend policies, and America's open culture and polity all help to strengthen the nation's soft power. Government organizations that dismiss

such criticism harm their own reputations as well as miss an important chance to attract elites from overseas (even if they are vehemently opposed to government policies). In fact, some analysts assert that turning Alhurra[16] into an international C-SPAN[17] that broadcast lectures, town halls, and parliamentary debates would increase the United States' return on investment.

2.2.2 *How public diplomacy implemented and employed by the government*

The idea of promoting positive images of one's own country is not new. The cornerstone of soft power is the ability to sway others' preferences. We are all aware of the power of attraction and enticement on an individual level. Political leaders have long understood the influence that comes with setting the agenda and dictating the terms of a discussion. The daily practice of democratic politics includes the deployment of soft power. The capability to form dispositions is frequently associated with auxiliary elements including an alluring personality, culture, political ideas and organizations, and tactics that are regarded as respectable or morally sound. An individual will not need to use coercion to get what they want done if they can persuade others that doing what they want is in their best interests.

Public diplomacy's influence is different from soft and hard power. Public diplomacy, especially in the UAE, differs from soft and hard power because it emphasizes direct communication and engagement with foreign publics. Public diplomacy uses dialogue and exchange to build relationships and foster understanding, unlike hard power and soft power, which use military and economic power to influence others. The UAE exemplifies this through initiatives like hosting global events (e.g., Dubai Expo), cultural diplomacy (e.g., Louvre Abu Dhabi), and educational exchanges, which go beyond mere attraction or coercion. These efforts represent a proactive approach to shaping perceptions and building international goodwill,

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[16] Alhurra is a United States-based public Arabic-language satellite TV channel, launched in 2004. It is operated by the Middle East Broadcasting Networks and primarily aimed at audiences in the Middle East and North Africa, offering news and cultural programming.
[17] C-SPAN, which stands for Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network, is an American television network founded in 1979. It provides non-stop coverage of government proceedings and public affairs programming, notably broadcasting live sessions of the U.S. Congress, without editorial commentary.

essential in today's interconnected world. Through public diplomacy, the UAE communicates its values and policies, listens to, and engages with global audiences, creating a two-way exchange fundamental to its unique and evolving role in international relations. Two more potential bases for influence include threats and money. Even though the ability to influence others through argument or persuasion is an important aspect of soft power, that is only one part of what it entails. It also involves having the ability to capture and entice others. Soft power can be viewed as persuasive power when applied to behavior. The assets that might offer such attractiveness in terms of capabilities are referred to as soft generation capability. To ascertain whether or whether a particular asset is a desirable soft power resource, surveys may be used. To ascertain whether or if the attraction in question has the desired policy effects, it is crucial to consider each specific situation. Though it is not unique to soft power, the distinction between power as resources and power as measured by conduct outcomes does exist. It occurs when many forms of power are used. For instance, Britain and France each had more tanks than Germany prior to France's 1940 surrender. However, even though one had the advantage in terms of military power and resources, one could not predict with certainty how the conflict would end.

However, over the past few years, there has been a striking change in the conditions required for the projection of soft power. For starters, in recent decades, democracy has extended to nearly half of the world's countries. The cold war competitive paradigm is no longer as useful as a guide for shaping public diplomacy. While it is still important to give residents of nations where the government controls the information, such as Burma or Syria, accurate information, there is a new emphasis on fostering positive international perception in nations like Mexico and Turkey. The government is in charge of the personal information that the public obtains in both of these jurisdictions where decision-making may now be influenced by legislators. For instance, when seeking aid from other nations for its engagement in the Iraq

War, the United States requested things like Mexico's backing at the UN or Turkey's consent for American Marines to enter its borders (United Nations, 2018). The waning of American soft power has produced an atmosphere that is less conducive to the success of American programs and more likely to work against them. When authoritarian administrations are removed from power, the cultivation of public opinion takes on an even greater level of significance. When the US could effectively seek the use of bases in totalitarian nations, democratic sympathy was not as essential of a factor. However, in light of the recent democratic developments in Mexico and Turkey, it turned out to be of critical importance. Even when foreign governments are favorable toward the United States, their political clout may be constrained if their populations and legislatures have a poor perception of the United States. When conditions are like this, communication that aims to influence public opinion may become just as crucial to the results as the more conventional kind of diplomatic contact that takes place behind closed doors between world leaders.

Public diplomacy can affect soft power in various aspects including international relations hence, it is important to pinpoint such implementation:

2.3   *Soft power impact on the international relations*

It might be a good idea if Harvard Professor Joseph Nye's theory of "soft power" is correctly interpreted (Saberi, Paris & Marochi, 2018). As opposed to opposing the "hard power" of coercion exercised by military or economic force, Nye claims that a nation's capacity to win over others is its "soft power." He asserted that a country's culture, political views, and foreign policy all have an impact on its soft power. Soft power has a greater impact than ever on how the world perceives the United States. That is partly because of the media technological revolution. As a result, the globe is now more informed about what is happening in the US. Depending on the viewpoint, on the other hand, soft power traits may be viewed as either

positive or negative. The internet revolution[18]has increased global audiences' awareness of both America's positive and negative traits (Abdi et al. 2019).

2.3.1 Foreign Direct Investment

While the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy has used the terms interchangeably, "public diplomacy" and "soft power" are distinct concepts. Public diplomacy can use soft power to inform and demonstrate a nation's benefits to an international audience. The American government employs a range of public diplomacy strategies. American art and photography collections, as well as bringing American musicians and artists to venues where they can be heard and seen, are a few examples. It is also important to understand that US public diplomacy is backed by American booksellers situated throughout the world as well as programs that bring teachers and students from other nations to the US to see life here. Promoting English-language education in nations where it is not the primary language of instruction is a part of the United States public diplomacy agenda. In order to attract international viewers, all of these events are geared toward highlighting the country's soft power.

Furthermore, the reach of U.S. public diplomacy extends to digital platforms and social media, where the American perspective on various global issues is shared, and dialogues are fostered with international audiences. This digital engagement is crucial in today's interconnected world, allowing real-time interaction and disseminating American values and policies. Additionally, U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide frequently organize cultural and educational events, seminars, and workshops that facilitate direct interaction between American representatives and local communities. These activities enhance cultural understanding, dispel misconceptions, and build trust. The U.S. also actively participates in international exhibitions and fairs, displaying American innovation, technology, and lifestyle,

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[18] The Internet revolution refers to the massive global change initiated by the widespread Internet adoption in the early 1990s, leading to unprecedented connectivity and information exchange. It transformed communication, commerce, and access to information, profoundly impacting society, culture, and economies worldwide.

further amplifying its soft power. These diverse initiatives under the umbrella of public diplomacy are instrumental in shaping global perceptions of the United States, underscoring the nuanced and multifaceted approach required for effective international engagement.

Experts assert that a state's softer powers may now affect foreign direct investment (FDI) for the first time in history. Recruitment of overseas students and tourist marketing are two instances of the influence that countries like China and India have at the UN General Assembly (Salisbury, 2018). The University of Edinburgh's Study of International Integrated Development conducted the latest study on behalf of the British Council. It made use of data collected between 2000 and 2012. In addition to an overall cultural rating, experts evaluated soft power, which includes access to educational institutions, affluence, freedom, and humanitarian investments (Dwigo & Dwigo-Barosz, 2018).

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) plays a pivotal role in countries' economic growth and development as a critical driver for economic expansion, modernization, and integration into the global economy. FDI occurs when a business or individual in one country invests in business interests in another country, typically in the form of establishing business operations or acquiring business assets in the foreign country. This investment is crucial as it not only brings in capital but also often includes the transfer of expertise, technology, and management skills. The inflow of FDI can lead to job creation, boost productivity, and stimulate innovation in the host country, thereby fostering economic development. For developing countries, in particular, FDI is a source of much-needed capital and a means to gain technical know-how and industry insights from more developed economies.

The impact of FDI extends beyond mere capital investment; it has significant implications for the host country's economic policy and business environment. FDI can influence the host country's international trade dynamics, as multinational companies involved in FDI often bring with them global supply chains and access to international markets.

However, the benefits of FDI are not automatic and can be influenced by the host country's regulatory framework, economic stability, and the overall investment climate. Political instability, lack of transparency, and inadequate infrastructure can deter foreign investors. Therefore, countries that attract FDI must create a conducive environment with a stable political and economic landscape, clear and favorable investment policies, and efficient legal and institutional frameworks. Balancing the inflow of foreign capital with the national interest and ensuring that FDI contributes positively to sustainable development remains a critical task for policymakers.

2.3.2 *Administration and Strategic Communication*

Since World War II, the administration has consistently used soft power in the Arab world to influence the region. Several methods of reaching those target groups. It has attempted to rebut or contextualize the bad reports that have been circulated. In addition, it has used all of the strategic communication instruments at its disposal to highlight the good qualities of American soft power (Serazio, 2017). Changes in the working environment have necessitated a shift in US public diplomacy operations in Arab countries' use of American soft power. To effectively communicate with Arab consumers, US diplomatic and military officials must contend with the following significant issues. How universal can we make the Arab people? The Arabic language is the native tongue of over 350 million people living in the Middle East and North Africa. There is a broad variety of opinions and loyalties among them, based on factors such as whether they are affluent or poor; urban or rural; Sunni or Shia; and so forth[19]. However, since they share many characteristics and may be generalized, reputable academics often use the terms "Arab perspectives" or "Arab conceptions" in their works. The majority of Arabs have a negative or very negative view of the United States' regional international affairs.

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[19] The terms 'affluent or poor, urban or rural, Sunni or Shia' refer to various socio-economic and religious demographics, highlighting differences in wealth, living environment, and Islamic sects, respectively, which can significantly influence opinions and loyalties within a society.

Despite this, people tend to have a favorable impression of the United States. For instance, consider the results of a survey conducted[20] in June 2004 in Morocco, Jordan, and the UAE. Research in six Arab nations in 2010 indicated that 76 percent of respondents viewed American or European films 3-7 times a week, and almost half of those surveyed said they consumed them frequently. Only France fared higher than the United States as a supporter of human rights and democracy. However, the United States came in second place among nations seen as the most dangerous to the Middle East.

2.3.3   Role of Communication Technology

Prior to the development of today's communication technology, the government of the United States of America had a far bigger number of channels via which it could communicate with populations located outside the country than it does at now. Communication technology encompasses various tools and platforms for transmitting, receiving, and processing information. This technology ranges from traditional media like television and radio to digital platforms like social media, internet forums, and mobile applications. An actual case study in the UAE that exemplifies the impact of communication technology is the country's rapid adoption of digital platforms for government services. For instance, the UAE government's launch of the 'UAE Pass' app revolutionized public access to government services, allowing citizens and residents to interact seamlessly with multiple government departments through their smartphones. This initiative demonstrates how modern communication technology can transform how a government interacts with its people, enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. Immediately after the end of World War II, the United States Department of State was not only in transatlantic telegraph communication with every diplomatic in every country outside the United States. In addition to that, it made use of it called a "wireless file" to send

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[20] A specific research study in June 2004 in Morocco, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates aimed to gauge public opinion and perspectives on various international affairs, including views on the United States.

the declassified complete texts of reform measures and USG commentary to each ambassador. Diplomats from the United States made great use of these documents by distributing them to journalists and editors from local media outlets. In addition, personnel of the government interpreted official papers into the languages spoken there. These documents were useful to the local media since they often came before the normal news stories regarding US policies. They were able to save both time and labour thanks to the interpretations. At the same time, broadcasts were being made on a daily basis by Voice of America, both in English and in a variety of other languages. Conveying remarks about US administration, such as live broadcasts from authorities, as well as commentary expressing the point of view of the US authorities, in addition to providing appropriate coverage of American society and culture. Because the media coverage would have ordinarily gotten shorter versions of the government pronouncements through the associated press, which had often been altered because of passing through that filtration, the government found these operations to be quite helpful (Scheufele, 1999). Consequently, the reporters got access to another more trustworthy interpretation of the authorized remarks made by the United States. In addition, the commentary included interpretations of US government actions and placed the remarks in a perspective that was beneficial to the US government. This increased the likelihood that the news organizations would see the words made by the United States government as being favorable.

2.3.4 *Hard Power*

On the other side, as the global system turns against it, hard power is losing importance. Make use of hard power as well. Effective power strategies have a significant role in the contemporary international system. The divide Nye made between hard power and soft power has stood the test of time (1990). He defines power, in general, as the ability to persuade others

in order to accomplish one's objectives[21]. As a coercive force employed through threats or financial inducements, as well as control or physical power. The "hard power" strategy focuses on using military force, harsh negotiating tactics, and trade penalties to further political objectives. Examples of hard force include the German invasion of Poland in 1939 and the financial sanctions imposed on Iraq by the UN during the 1991 First Gulf War. On the other side, co-optive or soft power is the capacity to persuade others to comply with one's wishes. Thus, in Nye's opinion, the capacity to enthrall and motivate others is a prerequisite for effective persuasion. Intangible resources include things like cultural, ideological, and institutional influence. According to Cooper, licensing is essential to soft power. Only when the state's acts are accepted as legitimate can soft power be increased. The Cold War-era dissemination of American culture inside Eastern Bloc nations and EU expansion efforts point to the existence of American soft power (Nair et al., 2020). Various forms of coercion and persuasion can be employed in a continuum to accomplish various objectives. Some of the instruments at our disposal are punishment, coercion, temptation, agenda setting, communication, and attraction. Hard and soft power methods must be simple to use in order to be effective. Huge nations with higher national incomes, like the United States and Russia, are able to support sizable armed forces and impose economic sanctions on smaller nations. It is harder to find these traditional heavy power tools in smaller states. But the soft generation capacity availability depends less on the size of a state. It is clear that tiny governments are capable of developing soft power.

2.3.5   *Shift towards the use of Soft Power*

In international politics, there has been a shift toward the use of soft power, with countries like India, Qatar, and Turkey favoring this strategy over hard force pressure. Soft

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[21] Hard power is defined as using military and economic means to influence the behaviour or interests of other political bodies. This approach often involves coercive tactics like military intervention, economic sanctions, or additional pressure to achieve political goals.

power refers to a nation state's arsenal of strategies that do not punish, reward, or threaten other parties into engaging in preferred behavior. Hard power, which refers to the tools that can actually be utilized in international affairs in the same way that carrots and sticks are, is in stark contrast. Cultural barriers, diplomatic initiatives, and military campaigns are a few examples of soft power initiatives that may help shape people's behavior. Hard power may explicitly suggest trade incentives, whereas soft power may imply the threat of military force or financial penalties. Soft power has long been a strategy used by nation-states in conducting foreign policy. However, in the national security realm, soft power has not yet achieved the same level of legitimacy or acclaim as its counterpart, hard power. According to a number of metrics, the US "soft power" is really on the decrease (Schrot, 2014). The USA was placed in fifth place internationally by the Soft Power 30 project in 2019, which is its lowest performance since the development's inception. On the inside, this fall is a reflection of the disparity that has existed, over the last two decades, between the financial allocations allocated to the Secretary of Defense and the Environmental protection Agency. Although a portion of this gap might be ascribed to the intrinsic cost difference between the two systems, the most of it cannot be explained. A public relations campaign will have lower overall expenses than an air power effort. The fact that the gap between the two assessments continues to widen is evidence that the United States places too much emphasis on its military might.

2.3.6   Soft Power Strategies

The soft power strategies are directed at human people, with all of the individualized uniqueness that they possess. Planners are given with easy secondary targets, such as buildings, bomb stockpiles, and money accounts, when military strength tactics are used. The concrete used on bombing ranges in the US is functionally equivalent to the concrete used in Iraq. It hence responds in the same way to a variety of firing solutions. On the other hand, tastes, opinions, and social standards are all susceptible to change due to a wide variety of external

influences. That is to say that people living in a suburban area outside of Chicago are likely to respond significantly differently to the same message as those living in a town outside of Nairobi. Because of this dynamic, it is necessary to have a significant amount of knowledge, cooperation across different agencies, and techniques that cut over disciplinary lines.

2.3.7   Shared Value Initiative

Consider the Shared Values Initiative (SVI)[22] was launched in late 2002 as a soft power with the intention of boosting pro-American attitudes across the Muslim world. Charlotte Beers, an advertising professional, served as the group's leader. The goal was to demonstrate to Muslims living outside of the US that Religion and American culture are not incompatible with one another but, nonetheless, complement one other. In the process of developing a multifaceted campaign with the goal of "selling" the United States abrod. Despite having backing from the Department of State at the time, Colin Powell, Ambassador Beers was not successful in selling the idea to U.S. ambassadors. In the aftermath of a disaster of 9/11, politicians and the public were looking for clear and speedy responses, as opposed to complicated and time-consuming social attitudes campaigns. The culture that prevailed throughout the Department of State was one in which promotional work was considered to be less effective and less honorable than the distinguished profession of diplomacy. This mindset frequently equated marketing to propaganda, which contributed to the difficulty of the situation. It was a typical criticism that *"You can't sell Uncle Sam like you sell Uncle Ben's,"* which is a criticism that refers to the intricacy of soft power efforts while simultaneously disregarding an integrated framework, which is required by these campaigns because of their complexities. After the original run of the show, SVI was discontinued since it was widely regarded as a failure by its critics. Charlotte Beers left the campaign soon after it was called

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[22] The "Shared Values Initiative (SVI)" was a U.S. government-sponsored campaign launched in 2002 to improve America's image in the Middle East post-9/11 by highlighting common values and cultural connections between the U.S. and Islamic countries.

off, claiming health reasons for her decision to step down. Those who advocate for the policy contend that it was never really given a chance and that it was terminated too soon. Because, among other reasons, soft power suffers from a second inherent weakness. Because soft power is difficult to define, it is also challenging to evaluate its level of success. Hard power, which is more focused on quantifiable resources, is a basic counting game, and so are the outcomes of its implementations. Hard power also focuses more on the resource management that can be measured. The goal of soft power is to influence people's views, which is a difficult "thing" to quantify in terms of power level (Haigh, 2020).

Take, for instance, the practice of target. Measurements of performance (MOP) and measurement of usefulness are included in the joint targeting process as evaluative notions (MOE). The former, known as MOPs, examines how well friendly troops are performing their targeting duties and provides planners with feedback. Are we approaching this the appropriate way? The second method, known as MOEs, analyses the results of those actions and questions. Are the actions that we are doing the proper ones? When these ideas are applied in an operational setting within the armed services, targeteers and security experts are able to monitor the development of advertisements and make certain that friendly forces are hitting the reporting and tracking with the appropriate weaponry in order to achieve the desired results.

2.3.8   *Soft Power achievements at Global level*

Soft power has genuine effects that can be measured in addition to being seen. One example is the success of the international exchange programs that were implemented during the Cold War, and another is the well-known and long-running Fulbright scholarship program. Two important results came from the American government's Cold War strategy of promoting graduate student exchanges. First of all, during a time when much of American politics was based on rumor and fear, it boosted the number of students across the nation who were informed about and had an understanding of the Soviet Union. Second, it helped the Soviet Union

establish a population of academics in Russia who were aware of how far behind their communist country was and could tell the difference between the truth and domestic propaganda that was supported by their own government. In a similar spirit, Fulbright scholars who spend time studying in various countries around the world frequently return home to share their knowledge. This expands their prior interactions and helps to foster their growing understanding and cooperation.

Because both the public and private sectors contribute to the dominant influence in other countries, the use of soft power is not solely within the purview of the Department of Homeland Security. There are numerous ways to observe the effects of soft power. As an illustration, consider how the English language is used in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands, more than 93% of the population is able to communicate in English. This pattern can be attributed in large part to the predominance of American media and periodicals as well as the Netherlands' relatively tiny population as a whole.

The pervasive influence of soft power, extending beyond the scope of government agencies like the Department of Homeland Security, is vividly illustrated in the widespread use of the English language in the Netherlands. This phenomenon is not random but a direct result of cultural and media influences, primarily from the United States. American films, television shows, music, and literature are significant in the Netherlands, making English a language and a cultural exchange conduit. This exposure has led to widely taught and spoken English, facilitating more accessible international business and tourism communication and enhancing the Netherlands' global connectivity. The small size of the Dutch population further amplifies the impact of external cultural influences, making the country more receptive to linguistic and cultural assimilation. The prevalence of English in the Netherlands is a testament to the subtle yet profound power of cultural and media influence in shaping societal norms and behaviors,

demonstrating how soft power operates through non-governmental channels to leave a lasting impact on a nation's linguistic landscape.

Saqr Ghobash, President of the National Federal Council of the UAE, made another visit to Brussels in January 2019 (Krzymowski, 2020). The UAE serves as a key strategic partner for the European Union in the realm of international aid. The President emphasized the UAE significant contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, highlighting the nation's pivotal role in advancing Goals 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16, and 17 (as illustrated in Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Goals

The UAE and the Union of European: These countries are collaborating. Participants in this event, including the EU commission, emphasized the need to help people in need as part of the 2030 Agenda for the United Nations. The rest of the world has praised the UAE activities in this area as paradigmatic examples. Because of this, EU leaders have pushed for further cooperation in the areas of international aid and the National Development Plan. In order for both parties to combine their efforts in the area of foreign aid and be more successful in the fight against extremism, Antonio López-Istriz White, a member of the European Parliament and the Secretary General of the European People's Party, stressed this requirement (Lock,

2010). Denis Haveaux, the head of the Red Cross Office in the EU, highlighted that his group was prepared to work with the Red Crescent on numerous projects, particularly for the benefit of those who have been impacted by various crises. The UAE efforts to give emergency help in numerous locations across the world were also presented to the European Parliament during the visit in the shape of an exhibition.

The Syrian, Yemeni, Somalian, Palestinian, Afghan, and Iraqi refugees and those in need are the main beneficiaries of the UAE assistance in creating capacity, according to the UAE Red Crescent Commission's Assistant Executive Secretary for Promoting Sustainable Development. One of the things the official emphasized was this. Due to the country's fulfillment of its pledges in this area, the UAE has retained its leadership of the world rankings for the fifth consecutive year in terms of the percentage of national GDP devoted to foreign development assistance.
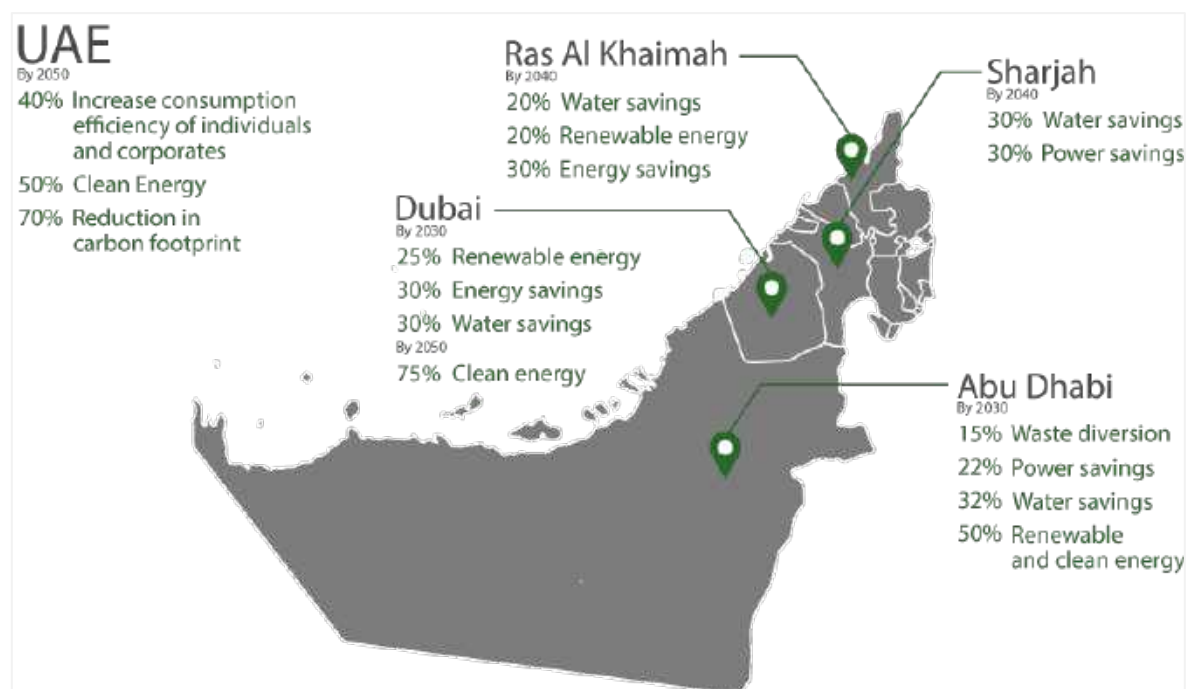
Figure 2.2: Sustainability Initiatives

In 2023, the UAE marked a significant milestone by declaring it the 'Year of Sustainability' under the banner 'Today for Tomorrow.' (refer to Figure 2.3). This initiative underscores the UAE enduring dedication to sustainable development, aligning with the vision of its Founding President, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The year is set to witness various activities and initiatives aimed at ingraining sustainable practices across various sectors, such as energy, water, technology, education, and infrastructure. These efforts align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and emphasize the UAE role as a global pioneer in green development and sustainable practices. Key initiatives include enhancing renewable energy projects, promoting water conservation, and advancing sustainable urban planning.

This commitment to sustainability was also a central theme in a high-level political dialogue between the UAE and the European Union in Brussels in July of the same year. The discussions covered current challenges in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Sudan, Libya, Iraq, Yemen, and the Sahel. Moreover, the stakeholders highlighted the role of Expo 2020 Dubai as a platform to exhibit these collaborative efforts in sustainable development.

In the broader context of soft power, the UAE focus on sustainability effectively enhances its global image and influence. This approach demonstrates a shift in soft power dynamics, prioritizing quality over quantity. Unlike immediate responses to crises, the impact of soft power initiatives, such as those in the field of sustainability, is more gradual and requires time to manifest and be accurately assessed. This is evident in the slow yet significant cultural shifts, similar to adopting English in the Netherlands post the Cold War era. These changes, while short-term, have long-lasting effects on international perceptions and relations. The UAE strategic focus on sustainability and collaborative international efforts exemplify a nuanced and impactful approach to wielding soft power in the modern world.

The Portland and USC Center[23] on Public Diplomacy is responsible for developing and conducting one of the most thorough studies of soft power. The review was released for the first time five years prior, and it is presently compiled once a year. On the other hand, public disclosure of battle damage estimates frequently occurs very instantly. This was seen in April 2017 when President Donald Trump ordered the attack on Syria's Shayrat Air Base. An announcement was given regarding the general state of affairs in the United States immediately following the strike. The contentious "Mission Was accomplished" declaration made by former U.S. President George W. Bush stands as a prime example of the plain nature of the effective use of strong force, despite the fact that it was made too soon. The American public were easily persuaded that the United States' efforts in Iraq were not only complete but also successful in light of the outcomes of military action. The insights that can be gained from marketing and psychoanalytic theory remind us that appeal is perhaps the biggest barrier that soft power must overcome.

2.3.9 *Soft Power is more intricate as compared to hard power*

Undoubtedly, soft power has more intricate strategic goals than hard power. The modification of human behavior should continually be the objective of a nation's foreign policy (Nye, 1990). The operational stages of soft power's implementation are characterized by more openness and directness of translation of the strategic goals being pursued. It is vastly more challenging to disguise the overall purpose during a soft power endeavor since the operating "targets" are typically human behavior and emotions, which are not readily measurable. This makes it very difficult to conceal strategic goals. The foreign policy of the United States may, in general, be described as being conventional and sluggish to change. This conventional strategy has, for a very long time, put an emphasis on realism principles, placing physical force

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[23] The "United States Code (USC)" is the official compilation and codification of the general and permanent federal statutes of the United States. It organizes laws by subject matter into 53 titles.

in the position of highest priority. Even the department that is in charge of "soft power" activities like as diplomacy and cultural exchanges has its own internal organizational culture challenges to overcome. For instance, when it came to the SVI, policymakers from the Ministry of foreign affairs were quite hesitant to adopt a multidisciplinary strategy that was presented by an advertising executive.

In addition, this history of conventional tactics has been disrupted throughout the course of the last three decades by times of heightened harshness in the international arena especially in the region known as the Middle East. In a nutshell, the United States places a premium on the severity and tried-and-true methods. Because it is still a relatively new concept, soft power suffers from a double disadvantage in this respect (Nye, 2009). Additionally, it is not regarded to be "difficult." Several decades ago, I was teaching a young Corporal in the Marine Corps about the concept of soft power. I discussed the differences between two distinct styles of leadership. The original method used both incentives and punishments to motivate employees to do their assigned responsibilities. The second acted in a way that appealed to the subordinate to promote the same conduct. This anecdote underscores a common misconception about the nature and effectiveness of soft power, particularly in leadership and influence. The term, often misunderstood as a sign of weakness or passivity, represents a strategic approach to leadership that relies on persuasion, influence, and example rather than coercion or direct orders. The corporal's preference for a leadership style that inspires and motivates rather than commands is a testament to the power of leading by example. This method fosters a sense of belonging and intrinsic motivation among team members, encouraging them to emulate positive behaviors not out of fear or for rewards but out of respect and a desire to be part of the collective identity. However, the reluctance to acknowledge this approach as 'strong' leadership reflects a broader societal tendency to equate strength with assertiveness and control. In reality, soft power can be a potent tool in various contexts, including politics, where successful campaigns

often hinge on the candidate's ability to connect with and inspire voters rather than simply taking a hardline stance on issues. This nuanced understanding of power and influence is crucial in recognizing the diverse strategies effective in leadership and governance. Being a good role model and gaining his or her respect, which ultimately leads to the Marine throwing out the garbage because he or she wants to be recognized as a member of the squad and as a good Marine even when there are no direct incentives or threats involved. When asked which form was more effective and preferred in general, the Corporal responded by stating their preference for the second option. I said that this was an example of soft power. No, I still do not like it. "That is weak, and leaders are not weak," he shot out in response. Although one may argue against this. A cursory examination of any political campaign will demonstrate that this is an isolated instance that is not representative of a broader pattern because the officials can't win elections by being "soft" on the campaign trail.

2.3.10 Criticism and Reassessing Soft Power

Many soft power criticisms accurately identify its limitations but fail to prove them. Since the Cold War, Shanghai social scientist and venture capitalist Eric Li claims that nations have overestimated their soft power capabilities. He criticizes the overemphasis on soft power, not the concept. Li claims soft power's importance is being questioned, not its merits. Additionally, scholars, particularly neorealists in international relations, are reluctant to acknowledge soft power's potential impact (Baumann, 2017). Soft power relies on non-state actors, which pragmatists dismiss. Many critics claim that soft power is ineffective in global politics, but they rarely provide evidence. Soft power in diplomacy faces challenges and constraints, but much of the skepticism stems from its sociopolitical appeal rather than its practical impact. Foreign policy decisions are political, and as the US reshapes its global strategy after the pandemic, policymakers must be aware of these risks and confront them without taking a power-centric approach.

According to experts, soft power benefits nations, businesses, and organizations of all sizes. A nation that builds a strong brand and leverages its soft power can attract tourists, foreign investors, and a reputation for high-quality goods and services. Soft power also improves a country's diplomatic relations with its neighbors, making it easier to market its natural and human resources and project a positive global image. Strong national brands and soft power can sometimes produce great domestic results. It can increase domestic tourism, local consumption, and homegrown goods and services. Beyond economic benefits, soft power boosts national pride and improves citizens' views of their country. This national outlook improvement can unite and inspire the population. Thus, soft power has many benefits beyond international relations. They improve a nation's external and internal relations, fostering growth and progress. Soft power helps nations and their populations generate long-term benefits at home and abroad through economic gains, global standing, or national identity (Figure 2.3).
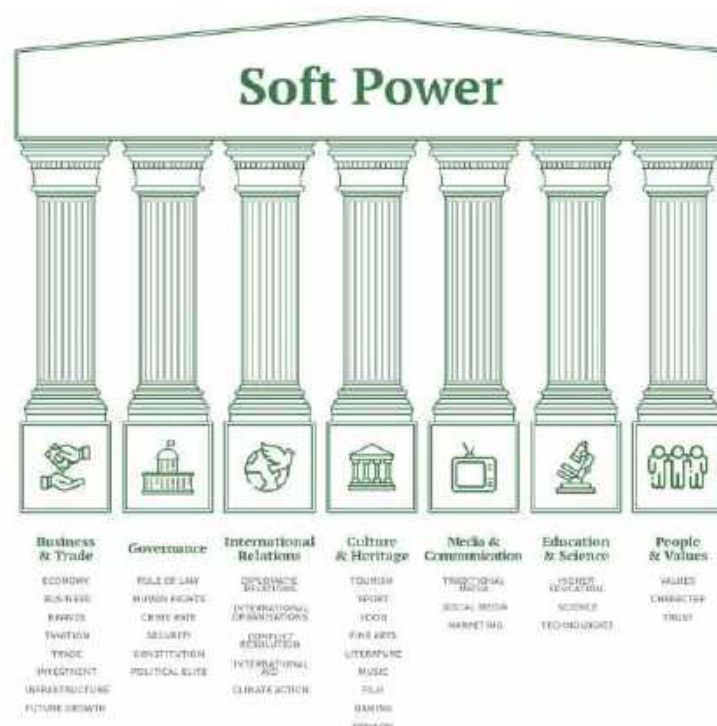
Figure 2.3: Overview of Soft Power

2.4   Role of Public Diplomacy in Soft Power

Public diplomacy is known to be essential to soft power development. Public diplomacy uses governments' soft power to influence other nations and players. The next sections make apparent how public diplomacy plays a part in soft power: these sections highlight the techniques and global relations. In addition, such role can be explained well in the theories' sections as follows:

Soft power is the capacity to sway people's opinions and advance one's objectives by subdued behavior and voluntary partner choices that are in the actor's best interests. Donations and financial support, however, can be more than just a component of soft power. Additionally, they become a component of hard power when combined with the compulsion's pressure (Nye 2004). Humanitarian, development, and international aid, one of the conventional soft power components, is the subject of this study. Its economic component is portrayed as desirable rather than coercive. However, the brand and overall reputation determine how successful soft power is (Günek 2018). The role of public diplomacy in enhancing soft power is critical to the landscape of modern international relations. Public diplomacy involves engaging with foreign publics to promote a country's cultural, political, and social ideals, thereby influencing other nations' international perceptions and behaviors. This approach is particularly significant for countries like UAE, which have focused on building their image through economic growth and cultural and intellectual influence. The UAE investment in global cultural projects, such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and international events like the Dubai Expo, demonstrates how public diplomacy can be employed to display a nation's achievements and values. These initiatives contribute to the UAE soft power by enhancing its global appeal and portraying it as a cultural and technological innovation hub.

The effective use of soft power, especially in the context of the UAE, is closely linked to the nation's core vision of becoming a progressive, tolerant, and forward-thinking society.

This vision is brought to life through public diplomacy initiatives emphasizing the UAE commitment to sustainability, innovation, and cultural diversity. For instance, the UAE pioneering work in renewable energy and hosting the World Future Energy Summit highlights its role as a leader in sustainable development. These efforts contribute to global causes and attract international admiration and partnership, bolstering the UAE soft power. Furthermore, the UAE focus on education and women's empowerment, through initiatives like establishing New York University Abu Dhabi and the Gender Balance Council, reflects its dedication to progress and equality, which is crucial in building a positive international image.

From the research perspective, the synergy between public diplomacy and soft power is evident in how the UAE has strategically positioned itself on the global stage. The UAE approach goes beyond traditional diplomatic channels, utilizing culture, education, and innovation to foster international relationships and influence. However, it is important to note that successfully applying soft power requires a nuanced understanding of the global political and cultural landscape. The UAE initiatives in public diplomacy demonstrate an awareness of the complexities of international relations and the need to engage with global audiences in a respectful, informative, and collaborative manner.

For this, the UAE launched the Soft Power Strategy to identify actions that could boost its global reputation. Aid boosts the UAE image and soft power (Gibbins, 2017). This boosts UAE international standing (Mills, 2017). Smaller Gulf countries use soft power, diplomatic hedging, and dynamic branding, according to Kamrava (2013). The UAE actively influences the region with modern soft power (Almezaini and Rickli, 2017). The UAE developed soft power tools to support its foreign policy in the 21st century. Ulrichsen (2017) says this strategy has increased global prestige. As a strategic tool to achieve its goals, the UAE has improved its image and built diplomatic relationships with recipient nations through international aid (Almezaini, 2011).

In September 2018, the UAE revealed its soft power to improve its international reputation (Woodward 2018). Making sure that many diverse sectors work together to provide humanitarian aid has been one of the major goals (Lock, 2010). The six pillars of the plan serve as the framework for diplomatic action. The chapter discusses teamwork, humanitarian diplomacy, and raising money for donations. UAE soft power needs improvement (Aldroubi, 2018). The UAE soft power strategy outlines its goals and approach to improving its global standing, according to Soft Power Council member Saeed Mohammad Al Eter, Director General of the Public Diplomacy Office in the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and the Future (Gulf News, 2017). Al Zaabi and Awamleh (2019) argue that the UAE soft power includes foreign policy, environmental sustainability, and international aid (p. 67). Due to consistent implementation of various methods, theories, and strategies, the UAE has become a hub for international humanitarian aid. UAE diplomatic efforts have facilitated bilateral, multilateral, and internal international organization partnerships across many global projects, supporting this growth.

The UAE utilization of public diplomacy to enhance its soft power is a testament to the evolving nature of international relations. By focusing on cultural exchange, sustainability, and innovation, the UAE contributes to its own national development and shapes global perceptions and dialogues. This strategy reflects a sophisticated understanding of soft power, where influence is garnered not through coercion or economic might but through the attractive power of a nation's culture, values, and policies. The UAE experience highlights the potential of public diplomacy as a tool for nations seeking to strengthen their international presence and influence in a complex, interconnected world.

The success of the UAE diplomacy as a soft power is symbolized by the International Renewable Energy Agency[24] choice of Abu Dhabi as its headquarters (Cara, 2012). It now serves as a method of giving LDC nations foreign aid. It should be highlighted that the soft power infrastructure of the UAE plays a critical role in enabling the efficient delivery of international aid, notably humanitarian relief. The contemporary, ever-expanding network of roads and highways is one of its elements. However, the UAE seaports and airports are important on a global level. The country has eleven seaports.

International Humanitarian City is not far from Port Jebel Ali, the biggest container port in the world. The new Khalifa Port[25] may be found 60 kilometers from IHC, roughly midway between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. It provides even another benefit for the use of soft power and international aid strategies. The largest aircraft may be handled at any of the 12 airports in the UAE. Dubai International Airport[26] is an important airport in the world. Soon, Abu Dhabi International will be a part of this collection. The International Humanitarian City is located midway between the two airports, around 70 kilometers from Dubai and 78 kilometers from Abu Dhabi. Additionally, the IHC is not far from Al Maktoum Airport.

Once finished, the airport will be the world's largest. Emirates Airlines, one of the world's largest airlines, also supports international charities. While the World Exhibition Expo 2020 runs from October 2021 to March 2022, the International Humanitarian City (IHC) next to it will play a crucial role in global humanitarian efforts. The Expo is one of the biggest global soft power events, offering many opportunities for humanitarian diplomacy and UAE international standing (Saberi et al., 2018). Expo 2020 Dubai is the first World Expo in the

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[24] The "International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)" is an intergovernmental organization that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, promoting renewable energy sources worldwide. Established in 2009, its headquarters are in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

[25] "The new Khalifa Port" is a deep-water port opened in 2012 in Abu Dhabi, UAE, designed to accommodate large container ships and significantly expand the region's maritime trade capacity.

[26] Dubai International Airport, one of the world's busiest international passenger traffic, is a significant aviation hub in Dubai, UAE. It is known for its advanced infrastructure and as a critical center for major airline Emirates. Opened in 1960, it has transformed Dubai into a global city and a vital link in international air travel.

Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and the Arab world. This event is crucial for discussing international aid, particularly humanitarian aid.

Each country at Expo 2020 Dubai has a pavilion to thank the UAE for its financial and logistical support. This initiative expands the UAE global influence and aligns with the SDGs' values. After the Expo, the site is expected to become a major Dubai business hub, strengthening the IHC and contributing to the UAE Soft Power Strategy. UAE sovereign wealth funds, among the world's largest, boost its influence. Abu Dhabi Investment Authority is the third-largest sovereign wealth fund, while the Investment Corporation of Dubai is 12th. The UAE led soft power globally and in North Africa and the Middle East in 2021. These developments demonstrate the UAE commitment to using soft power, humanitarian diplomacy, and economic strength to increase its global influence and solidify its humanitarian and economic leadership.

In the analysis of the UAE soft power strategy, it is clear that the nation has skillfully utilized tools like Expo 2020 and sovereign wealth funds like the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and the Investment Corporation of Dubai to enhance its global influence and align with the Sustainable Development Goals. The transition of the Expo 2020 site into a business hub post-event exemplifies the UAE forward-thinking approach to sustainable development and economic growth. However, it is noteworthy that while the UAE foreign aid has bolstered its soft power, the effectiveness of reaching all those in need has been mixed. This highlights the complexity of international support, where the impact can be significant yet uneven. Nonetheless, the overall strategy has effectively raised the UAE stature globally, demonstrating the power of combining economic might with strategic diplomacy.

It has to be underlined that the UAE employs effective soft power tools while evaluating its use and the repercussions. It has helped to strengthen this state's position in the world and build the reputation of the entire nation. Foreign aid provided by the UAE, however, did not

always succeed in helping everyone who needed it. The beneficiaries of help were primarily to blame for this. However, it was successful in terms of its importance for the effectiveness of soft power. It has increased the likelihood of having an impact on the global environment.

2.4.1 Soft Power and International Relations

Soft power is crucial to international relations today. Soft power has emerged as a way to understand complex interactions between countries and how they influence global actors without coercion (Karki & Dhungana, 2020). Hard power has traditionally dominated intellectual discourse. It is a great foreign policy strategy for international engagement. In today's world, soft power shapes national identities. Schneider (2009) defines soft power as persuasion without coercion. To influence other nations, governments worldwide strive to improve their soft power. Nye Jr. (2008) defines soft power as the ability to influence others without using rewards or threats.

Nye (2008) emphasizes that political leaders must understand that power comes from attractiveness to achieve tangible and beneficial results for their nation. Political values, institutions, policies, moral authority, and peaceful leadership make this attractive. Influential leaders value influence and allure. Gallarotti (2011) examines how decision-makers can influence global politics and use diplomatic strategies. Patalakh (2016) discusses "soft power" and how it helps analyze a state's foreign policy, especially when even minor military conditions matter. The complexities of hard power in conflicts have increased the preference for soft power. For instance, Hall (2012) claims that hard power can lower a nation's global standing, making it harder to attract foreign investment and tourism. Soft power has become the preferred strategy.

Countries are encouraged to use soft power, such as shared interests, strategic diplomacy, culture, ideas, and lifestyles, to influence each other (Banks, 2011). Liu and Turner suggest that Nye's (2018) soft power concept, which emphasizes a country's ability to attract

others, supports Banks' claim. Nye believes intangible resources define a desirable nation. In this context, culture, lifestyle, and diplomacy are linked to boosting the state's power and policy legitimacy (Hall, 2012). Hard power can help states control others, but its effects are usually temporary. Koch (2016) claims that physical power can temporarily compel nations. They may be drawn to other nations offering more than oppression or use their cultural identity to escape tyrants. Thus, a nation seeking gradual influence and popularity favors soft power.

Academic study on soft power is still regarded as being in its early stages. There is still disagreement about the meaning of the term and whether or not nations may refer to themselves as supporters of this force (Sun, 2013). Soft power, however, is still crucial in deciding a nation's standing in the globe. To interact on various levels with the nations they compete with, nations must seek to advance soft power. It is essential for boosting investment and tourism (Saberi, et al., 2018). The fact that soft power promotes trade, tourism, and fruitful communication is one of the key reasons that countries pursue it. Therefore, soft power affects a nation's capacity to draw both investment and tourism. Situations involving power interactions concealed within a more conspicuous constellation are referred to as "soft power" as a subclass of meta-power that also involves social links (Valeri, 2018). It consequently affects these relationships and the results that can be predicted when actors interact. The meta-power component of soft power is concerned with influencing social interactions and circumstances.

Soft power is a novel concept in international relations that raises public awareness of important political issues (Lopez-Guzman & Gonzalez Santa-Cruz, 2016). Cultural practices help achieve this. Actively engaging with international partners boosts soft power. Soft power helps countries communicate and defend their foreign policy goals globally. Nations often use the international stage to gain respect and soft power. Schneider (2009) compared this pursuit to a beauty contest, indicating that soft power is vital to any nation. According to Beydoun and

Zahawi (2016), presenting a positive image highlights a nation's strengths. Soft power works best when used naturally. According to Cho and Jeong (2008), a natural approach is needed to evaluate soft power initiatives. Their theory states that a state's soft power depends on the right mix of factors (Al Suwaidi, 2021). Thus, soft power is a nation's ability to influence others globally and build a good reputation among international actors (Koch, 2016). Governments launch global campaigns to share their stories with targeted international audiences to improve their image.

Dinnie (2010) says these campaigns are sensitive and nuanced programs, not propaganda. While this practice is old, scholarly interest in it has grown recently. Before using government soft power to promote ideas, you must understand the model and stakeholder goals. Modern soft power goals include "nation branding". Governments and public relations professionals work together to brand a nation's image domestically and internationally (Figure 2.4). Bolin and Miazhevich (2018) describe emerging "commercial nationalism." In this view, a state's administration markets the nation like a product. State institutions try to "sell" their ideology, worldview, and country to international public actors. When a state promotes its image abroad, commercial nationalism shows a cultural shift. Commercial nationalism—integrating business and government, collaboration, and shared values—is essential to understanding public policy changes in this thesis.
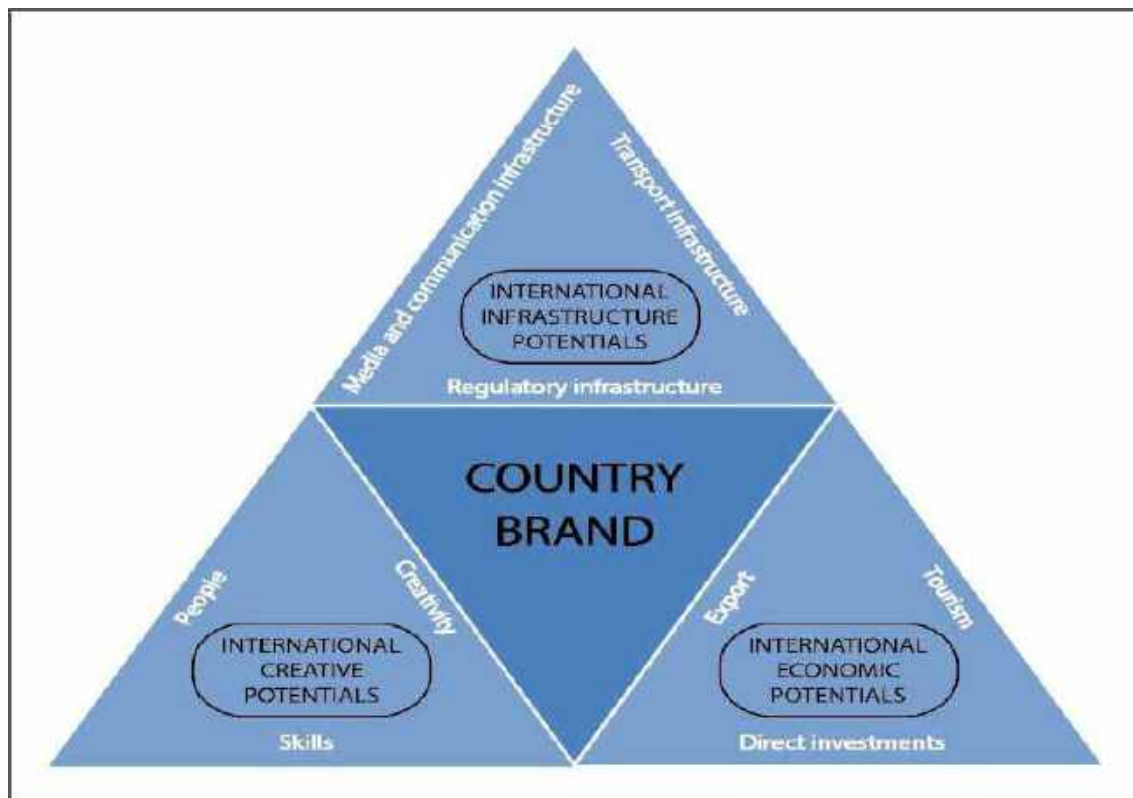
Figure 2.4: Country Branding

According to Lopez-Guzman and Gonzalez Santa-Cruz (2016), the international relations' approach is dynamic, diverse, and takes many different shapes on a global scale. Cultural values are crucial for determining the global agenda for international relations. Although the culture impact on cross-cultural interactions is not always instantaneous becoming important if cultures collide at a site of international significance. According to Banks (2011), cultural diplomacy specifically promotes economic, social, and political relations among people by gently managing cultural expression and establishing goals. Therefore, the development of positive international relations is a result of cultural diplomacy.

A cultural element has been incorporated into the soft power tactics of the majority of Asian countries, especially in light of the value of maintaining solid relationships with one's neighbors. It is significant to highlight that a number of countries, like UAE, have heavily utilized social and cultural factors to improve their connections with other countries.

Incorporating cultural elements into soft power strategies is a prominent feature of many Asian countries, with the UAE being a prime example. This approach emphasizes social and cultural factors as crucial for establishing and enhancing international relations. The UAE, in particular, has adeptly woven its rich cultural heritage and modern cosmopolitan ethos into its foreign policy. This integration is evident in initiatives such as cultural festivals, international art exhibitions, and the establishment of cultural institutions like the Louvre Abu Dhabi. These endeavors are showcases of the nation's culture and serve as platforms for cultural exchange and dialogue. By highlighting its unique, blend of tradition and innovation, the UAE positions itself as a culturally rich and diverse nation, enhancing its appeal and influence on the global stage.

From an author's perspective, the strategic use of cultural elements in the UAE soft power approach aligns with its broader vision of being a progressive, tolerant, and globally connected nation. The emphasis on culture in public diplomacy serves multiple purposes: it portrays the UAE as a bridge between Eastern and Western cultures, fosters mutual understanding and respect, and challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about the Arab world. Furthermore, by promoting its culture, the UAE invests in its national identity, reinforcing a sense of pride and unity among its citizens. This approach demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of soft power, where influence extends beyond economic and political might to encompass the compelling allure of a nation's cultural narrative. The UAE's success in this realm suggests that cultural diplomacy is an effective tool in building soft and enduring power and fostering long-term relationships and goodwill among nations.

2.5   Theoretical Foundation

According to the research framework, the soft power is the primary independent variable in this study. All of the significant dependent variables in this study have a demonstrable impact on the overall thesis. Humanitarian and academic policies (Saberi, et al.,

2018), public and media policies, and security and national representative policies are three crucial dependent public policy frameworks (Antwi-Boateng and Alhashmi, 2021). These are some of the key dependent variables that are used as key concepts for employing the entire framework and can represent the key research strengths and debate points. This is how these policies have a significant role in the overall growth picture. The most crucial ideas inside the most practical frameworks in the UAE have been touched by these policies. This is how it has affected the methodologies that have been finished and accurately reported (Mohajan, 2018).

Since ancient times, scholars have studied a variety of topics, but among the earliest was diplomacy, which was frequently interpreted in terms of the conventional definition of "hard power" (Snow and Cull, 2020). However, as the international political climate has evolved, its negative consequences have been more intense, and the cost of utilizing military action, which was once acceptable, has increased while keeping in mind that economic dependency (Snow and Cull, 2020). In earlier eras, there was a lot less commerce between states. Accordingly, this was the catalyst that caused the concept of power to change and gave rise to the term "soft power," as researched by Antwi-Boateng and Alhashmi (2021).

Foundation for Soft Power: According to Droz-Vincent (2020), because it complements hard strength, soft power is equally important. Although hard power serves as the foundation for soft power, it also improves the state's attractiveness and its capacity to control and harness soft power sources and channel them in the right direction (ntwi-Boateng, &Alhashmi, 2021). Matheson (2020) asserts that soft power also gives strong power a veneer of legitimacy in the eyes of other people. Because of the terrible events that occurred in the twentieth century, smart power emerged as a way to demonstrate the futility of using hard power or soft power separately and to establish smart power as a concept with significant meanings and implications for altering the foreign policy of powerful nations (Tago, 2017). The study's main theoretical foundation is the soft power theory. Conceptually, it was also

determined how media could promote soft-power projects from the perspectives of the general people using the media framing theory. The persuasive mechanism described above is the practical manifestation of the soft-power approach to foreign policy and diplomacy. Every action in the realm of interstate political relations has as its primary objective the accomplishment of the objectives of one state. Military aggression, threats, and hostilities are a few examples of enforcement techniques that could be utilized in line with hard-power notions (Droz-Vincent, 2020).

Since the target of influence is aware that the actual decision was made under duress and against its interests, hard-power tools are typically useless (Melissen, 2005). The target of influence will work to reposition itself as soon as the aggressor releases the duress. By contrasting various soft power approaches, the state's political leaders can persuade the targeted country to adopt a different course of action from what it is currently doing. The advantages of the new model are in accordance with what the target of the influence wants, but it is possible that the object is not even aware of this. As a result, there is a higher chance that the target of the influence will approve the recommended decisions, and the impact over a hard-power solution will be more lasting.

The biggest issue with recommending this framework is that, despite being successful in establishing policies, their governments are not having the desired impact. These governments frequently succeed in enacting laws, constructing schools, and creating information technology systems, but they struggle to ensure that these services have the desired impact. This fails to put many established regulations into practice, many schools are unable to inspire their children to learn, and the offered information technology solutions are not being used. Because of this, many of the issues that these regulations are meant to address are still unaddressed. The conceptual framework is suggested for using the public policy model.
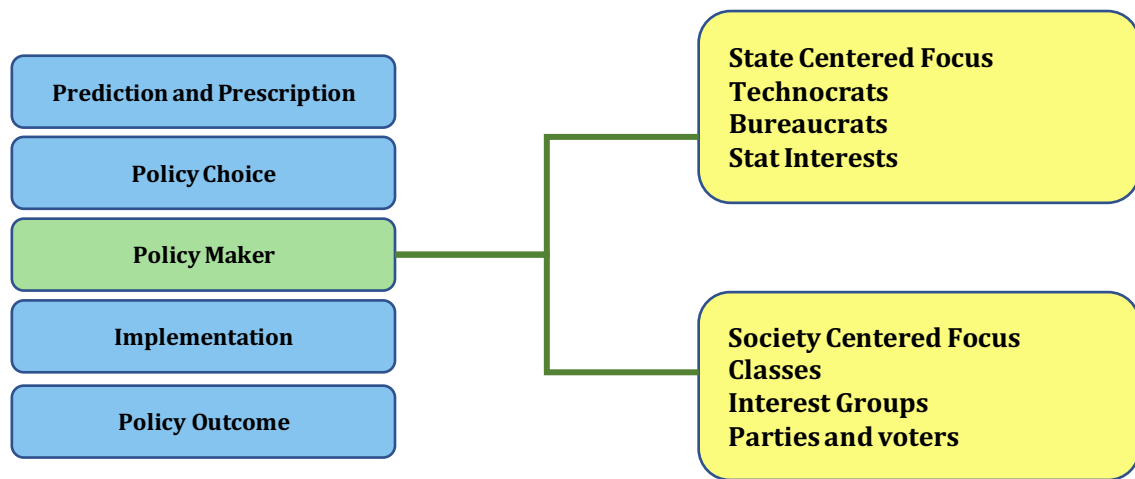
Figure 2.5: Theoretical Foundation of Countries' Policies (Nisbett)

The framework mentioned above in Figure 2.5 focuses on the core issue, which is that despite being successful in putting public policies into place, some countries including UAE administrations are not having the desired impact. In order to tell the story of the UAE to the world in a novel way, the government, private sector, and civic agencies will collaborate to create an integrated national system under the direct supervision of the Council of Ministers (Matheson, 2020). The council will also focus on creating a soft power plan for the state that incorporates every field of science, culture, the arts, humanitarianism, and business to strengthen contact with the local and global communities (Augustine, 2018).

The Council will examine all laws and regulations. Influencing how the UAE is perceived, presenting a comprehensive plan to the Council of Ministers in the next months, and enhancing the UAE standing in all key international strategic regions (Nisbett, 2021). These actions frequently provide the desired results by developing policies and putting them into practice. They may encounter difficulties, nevertheless, in ensuring that these stages have the intended impact. This fails to put into practice numerous defined policies, the social and humanitarian challenges that should inspire their students to learn, and the failure to utilize the supplied systems for determining policy. As a result, the UAE still has a number of issues that

public policies are meant to address but may be handled by putting the suggested framework into practice.

2.5.1 *Theory of Soft Power*

The UAE approach to soft power is multifaceted, involving the strategic use of culture, political values, and foreign policies to create a positive and influential global image. This approach is evident in the UAE efforts to position itself as a hub of cultural exchange, innovation, and economic development. By hosting world-renowned events like the Dubai Expo and investing in iconic cultural projects like the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the UAE demonstrates its commitment to fostering global partnerships and displaying its achievements and vision to the world.

Public diplomacy serves as the cornerstone of the UAE soft power strategy. It involves engaging with international audiences through cultural, educational, and informational activities, influencing their perceptions, and building long-term relationships. The UAE focus on public diplomacy is not just about promoting its culture and achievements; it also involves actively participating in global discussions on sustainability, renewable energy, and humanitarian aid. Initiatives like the Zayed Sustainability Prize and the Dubai Future Foundation reflect the UAE commitment to contributing constructively to global challenges. These efforts enhance the UAE reputation as a responsible and progressive nation and align with its broader goals of fostering peace, understanding, and cooperation on the international stage.

At the end of the Cold War, Joseph Nye's book "Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power" (Nye, 1990) made the idea of "soft power" widely known. Later, the term "soft power" was frequently used to describe the perceived increase in regional and global influence, and it developed a conceptual quality (Yukaruc, 2017). A sort of international influence known as "soft power" is built on a country's appeal in terms of a variety of

techniques, including cultural, educational, political, and economic exchanges and relationships. A country's "soft power" increases when other nations start to regard its ideologies or policies as reasonable, if not desirable. Increasing one's relevance and legitimacy is what the theoretical concept of "soft power" refers to. Many nations are aware of how crucial it is to engage in strategic politics of appeal, prestige, and reputation using soft power resources and tools (Archives, 2017). This is due to the fact that working together to advance a country's aims can be just as vital as using force to do so (Lee, 2011).

Furthermore, the UAE soft power strategy is intricately linked to its core vision of becoming a leading global player in various sectors, including technology, education, and sustainable development. The country's investments in cutting-edge technologies, world-class educational institutions, and sustainable urban planning are not mere domestic policies but integral to its international image-building. The UAE attracts foreign talent, investment, and collaboration by displaying its advancements in these areas, thereby enhancing its global influence and soft power. The UAE application of soft power, driven by effective public diplomacy, underscores the country's strategic approach to international relations. This approach highlights the significance of soft power in modern diplomacy and its role in enabling the UAE to realize its ambitions on the global stage.

Many academics have redefined the concepts of soft power since Nye's formulation, which claims that the capacity to engage and persuade is the essence of soft power. As opposed to Joseph Nye's split between coercive and cooperative power, Geun Lee proposed creating a distinction between hard and soft resources. Lee categorizes soft power into five groups based on the resources employed and the objectives it seeks to achieve: (a) the use of soft power to project a nation's serene and attractive images will improve the external security environment. (b) Soft power will encourage other countries to support their international and national security agendas. (c) Soft power will be used to influence the tastes and opinions of other

countries. (d) Soft power will be used to maintain a groups or a group of nations' unity. (e) Making use of soft power to boost domestic support for a government or the popularity of a leader (Lee, 2009). A soft power theoretical framework by Lee shows how to distinguish soft from hard powers. His conceptual framework extends Nye's soft power definition and categorization. Lee, unlike Nye, linked power to its nature to distinguish between hard and soft forces (Vasilevskyt, 2013).

2.5.2 Smart Power Theory

The smart power concept, which holds that adequate power requires a mix of hard and soft power, has dominated international power debates and U.S. foreign policy (Nossel, 2004; Armitage and Nye 2007; Wilson 2008, Nye 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2011a, 2011b, Resnick, 2015). The potential and ramifications of smart power strategy in EU foreign relations have also been examined (Davis Cross, 2011; Grn & Wivel 2011). It is claimed that smart power is innovative, which may be true of the word but not of the idea in general. Smart power does, however, provide some significant interpretational challenges. The use of language and terminology contributes to the issue. The term "smart" has the same difficulty as the related ideas of soft and hard power in that it is more seductive than informative. What soft power is beyond the fact that it is not hard, and vice versa. Similarly, there is no clear knowledge of smart power available, other than the fact that it is superior to alternatives in terms of effectiveness and suitability for specific objectives. From a different angle, the notion of smart power as the effective fusion of soft and hard power components borders perilously near on becoming a truism.

The argument is that the intricate idea of prudence one of classical realism is defining characteristics is crucial for this goal. In light of this, the next part explains the idea and draws comparisons between conventional ideas of political prudence and the implicit "smartness" of the use of smart power. The third section expands on the claim that the classical realist school

of thought is fundamentally where smart power originates. Finally, it should be noted that the argument aims to interpretive rather than exegetical. Instead of attempting to define what Nye or anybody else has in mind when discussing the concept of smart power.

2.5.3   *Focus on Soft and Smart Power*

The UAE with its strategic approach to foreign policy, has been an active player in this arena, employing both soft and bright power in various contexts. In the case of Israel and Palestine, the UAE approach can be seen as a blend of soft and clever power tactics. The UAE involvement in the Abraham Accords, which normalized relations with Israel, is an example of innovative power in action. While leveraging the UAE economic and political influence (elements of hard power), this diplomatic move was also heavily reliant on soft power elements like cultural exchange and dialogue. By advocating for peace and stability in the region, the UAE positions itself as a mediator and a responsible actor in international politics. However, the complexities of the Israel-Palestine conflict mean that the UAE efforts in this area are carefully balanced, aiming to maintain regional stability and foster diplomatic relations.

Regarding the Afghanistan war, the UAE role has been multifaceted. The UAE has not only participated in military operations as part of international coalitions but has also been involved in humanitarian and development efforts in Afghanistan. This approach exemplifies innovative power – combining military involvement (hard power) with significant investments in Afghanistan's infrastructure, education, and healthcare systems (soft power). The UAE efforts in Afghanistan reflect a strategic understanding of the need to combine various forms of power to achieve lasting influence and stability in a complex and turbulent region. The UAE role in other regional conflicts and humanitarian crises also highlights its commitment to using soft power as a foreign policy tool. The country has been involved in various humanitarian relief efforts, providing aid to war-torn areas and supporting refugees. These actions enhance the UAE reputation as a compassionate and responsible international actor. The UAE strategic

use of media and public diplomacy further amplifies its soft power, allowing it to shape narratives and influence perceptions globally.

The rise of soft and smart power reflects changing international relations. Soft and smart power have long been important sources of state influence, but global politics have increased their importance. A "softer and smarter world" implies a global shift, forcing leaders to balance soft and hard power to maximize national influence. Soft and smart power will shape global outcomes in this new global system. Threats and other hard power mechanisms are less important, and those who understand hard power's limitations and soft power's potential are more influential. Leaders can maximize national influence in this changing world by combining soft and physical power. Several global political shifts show this. First, nuclear-armed nations now pay more to threaten or use military force. The high cost of war has made major power conflicts almost unthinkable since the nuclear revolution (Jervis, 1993). Even traditional warfare is too expensive with modern conventional military technologies (Mueller, 1988). Soft power is now more effective than physical power in achieving long-term state security.

Second, global democracy has reduced coercion and force. Since the public, who often suffer the consequences of such coercion, now has political power over decision-makers, they can block its use. The democratic peace process changed state power dynamics (Doyle, 1997). Democratic culture influences national leaders toward soft power liberal values beyond enfranchisement. Thus, leaders must use less complicated power in foreign policy. Instead, they should influence outcomes with democratically legitimate and liberal policies.

Third, modernity and the ensuing interdependence in socioeconomic and political systems further reduce the usefulness of hard power (Herz, 1957)[27]. The social and economic integration process is further strengthened by globalization. The interdependence of networks involving both national and international participants is exacerbated by these stronger links.

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[27] Hard power trends in global politics where traditional means of exerting influence through military and economic means have become less effective due to increasing socioeconomic and political interdependence.

Strategies for maximizing national wealth and influence have changed away from coercion and force in such a setting since these actions can have significant socioeconomic and political implications that amount to self-punishing in an interdependent society (Haskel, 1980). Populations become much less enamored with a *"warrior ethic"* as a result (Jervis, 1993). The attempt to impose certain particular outcomes on targeted actors is, however, much more elusive than the search to restrict the negative effects of coercion and force in such an environment. Targeted actors have a lot more ways to get away in a society where everything is interconnected. Having access to the global political economy allows national and multinational entities to avoid being forced. They need only seek sanctuary in one of the many international havens to avoid coercion. This contemporary "economic feudalism" brought forth by interdependence is changing the state-transnational network power nexus in one significant way (Nye, 2004). These factors both lessen the likelihood of political conflict and move the focus of competitiveness away from threats and use of force (Rosecrance, 1999).

Fourth, this new global order has elevated economics, making economic interdependence a compelling reason to downplay raw military force. This is mostly because modern societies are more economically sensitive. According to Gallarotti (2000), national leaders are now more driven by economic needs than international adventurism for political survival. This change is linked to welfare-oriented policies and democratic governance. This "prosperous society" has changed domestic and international politics through democracy. Economics, job creation, and social prosperity have taken precedence, so cooperative approaches are preferred over hard power tactics, which could jeopardize these goals. Post-World War II international institutions—including regimes and organizations—have strengthened national cooperation. Unilateral actions that ignore or undermine these institutions are costly and undesirable due to this interconnectedness. These institutions have raised international behavior standards, making soft and smart power more important,

according to Krasner (1983). Thus, states are increasingly prohibited from using illegal or illegitimate coercive measures, with cooperative networks now playing a larger role in compliance.

In this context, the UAE foreign policy strategy emphasizes soft and smart power, showing a nuanced understanding of modern diplomacy. By strategically balancing hard and soft power, the UAE has become a global player, especially in the Middle East. This approach works because the nation actively participates in regional issues like the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Afghanistan war. The UAE diplomatic efforts demonstrate its commitment to regional stability and humanitarian efforts and its global political acumen. This balanced and multifaceted foreign policy strategy shows the UAE ability to navigate international relations, boosting its influence and promoting long-term stability.

2.5.4 Evaluating UAE Global Influence

Reviewing the pertinent ratings of states from the standpoint of soft-power strategy is the best place to start when evaluating the efficacy of the UAE current soft-power strategy. *Year of Sustainability:* Looking at the 2023 'Year of Sustainability' from a different perspective, the 'Year of Sustainability' will likely feature an increased focus on sustainable technology and innovation. The UAE has become a hub for innovative solutions related to renewable energy, water conservation, waste management, and sustainable agriculture. These technologies are exported globally, enhancing the UAE international standing and influence. The UAE uses this opportunity to build partnerships with other countries and international organizations focused on sustainability. This could include joint research projects, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building programs, strengthening the UAE diplomatic ties and international cooperation. The UAE was determined to rank at the 20th spot in terms of economic presence, the 31st spot in terms of military presence, and the 26th spot in terms of

soft power when taking into account the various global-presence index elements. It is important to emphasize the UAE startling improvement in the world rankings between 1990 and 2017.

UAE placed 67th on the global scale in 1990; as of 2018, they are now ranked 21st. Not to note, according to Gulf News (2020), the UAE political engagement in the world rose from 0.1% in 1990 to 1% in 2017. The state's present soft power strategy has increased its influence in international issues. To pinpoint the elements that greatly boosted the UAE international standing, a thorough examination of the country's present soft-power strategy is essential. Furthermore, suggestions for further strengthening the nation's positions in this area are essential in light of soft power strategy.

The Brand Finance Global Soft Power Index 2021 study illuminates the UAE political situation. The UAE implemented soft power strategies better than most Middle Eastern countries (Brand Finance, 2021). UAE ranked 18th globally. The study examined awareness, familiarity, influence, reputation, and performance across seven soft power pillars to evaluate the UAE soft power strategy. UAE soft power was 45.9 out of 100. To understand the UAE soft power strategy's success, each pillar must be examined—business and trade, international relations, media and communication, education and science, people and values, culture and heritage, and organization and management.

The results of the UAE evaluation in the global soft power ranking and a comparison of these findings to the development of the top students in the class demonstrate that the UAE soft-power strategies are ineffective across all evaluation categories. The UAE soft-power policies do best in the areas of commerce and trade when measured against global best practices (Commercial Diplomacy). The experts at Brand Finance concurred that the UAE favorable business climate, robust economy, and investor consensus that the country is a good place for a commercial hub are responsible for the company's high rankings in this sector. In comparison to other participants, the soft-power assessment field simultaneously showed the lowest rating

results in the research and educational fields. The UAE is not now regarded as a significant source of technical innovation or knowledge since scientists are less interested in the country than they are in countries that are leaders in these industries. Once the knowledge-based economic model is realized, the government should be able to strengthen its positions in the research and technology sectors.

According to the evaluation, a strong soft-power strategy made the UAE stand out among Arab nations. Professionals and skilled workers worldwide are drawn to the country's trade and culture (Gundle, 2020). The UAE attracts foreign professionals who improve the economy and society with many career and personal growth opportunities. The UAE must evaluate its current strategies to identify its strengths and weaknesses and improve its soft power. The goal is to position the UAE as a gateway to the region, unify humanities, economy, tourism, science, and media sectors, and establish the UAE as a modern, tolerant, and welcoming nation (The Official Portal of the UAE, 2020).

The program aims to integrate economic and social development into UAE soft power. The UAE is a major player in MENA due to its geographic location and history. Expo 2020 boosts the country's regional dominance and influence. The UAE emphasizes "humanitarian diplomacy, scientific and academic diplomacy, national representatives' diplomacy, people diplomacy, cultural and media diplomacy, and economic diplomacy" in its soft power framework (The Official Portal of the UAE, 2020). These ambitious goals could put the UAE at the top global soft power rankings. A thorough analysis of the UAE achievements in these areas is needed to understand its strategy.

The UAE progress in economic diplomacy is noteworthy. Due to its strong economy and international reputation, state and non-state actors actively seek economic and commercial partnerships with the UAE, according to Brand Finance (2020). The nation has attracted more international projects and investments as a reliable and prosperous economic partner. This

reputation and steady economic growth make the UAE a key player in global partnerships and soft power. The UAE can improve its global standing by excelling in these strategic areas, demonstrating its commitment to integrating economic development with diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. These efforts help the country become a soft power leader.

Diplomatic research and academia initiatives have performed worst in terms of soft power. In 2015, the UAE created the Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy to strengthen its soft power strategy by aligning with global scientific and academic trends. Since the early 21st century, the UAE has actively addressed global humanitarian issues, gaining international support. The UAE has provided the most humanitarian aid per capita since 2013 (Lauri, 2018), showing a commitment to the humanitarian issues of the Middle East and Balkans. The UAE has also built humanitarian infrastructure to support these initiatives. Since 2004, Dubai has been a logistical hub for storing and distributing humanitarian aid in the Middle East (Lauri, 2018). Dubai also hosts the annual DIHAD-Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development Conference and Exhibition, which brings together for-profit and non-profit humanitarian aid organizations (Lauri, 2018).

2.6 How to strengthen the soft power employing public diplomacy

It can be strengthened in UAE by employing various essential ways including the government leadership, enhancing all of safety and stability, additionally, and economic progress. Furthermore, there are other important factors strengthening soft power e.g., culture, education, tolerance, women empowerment, foreign affairs, aids, peacekeeping, and some other related components explained in detail below:

2.6.1 *Model of leadership and government*

In the face of persistent geopolitical upheaval and hardship, the UAE has succeeded unlike any other federal state in the Gulf. The success of the UAE federal model in light of the

rising separatist sentiment in some regions has also contributed to the country's reputation as a soft and significant regional and international power (Trends Institution, 2018). "UAE status as a stable, business-friendly region and a very tolerant society will augment its image and subsequently its soft power," as claimed by Emirati Experts. Its numerous foreign policy triumphs will be a result of all these qualities.

The model of leadership and government in the UAE has significantly influenced its public diplomacy and soft power strategy. The UAE leadership, under the vision of its founding father, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and its current leaders, has always emphasized tolerance, innovation, and global engagement principles. This approach is reflected in the UAE foreign policy prioritizes peaceful coexistence, international cooperation, and mutual respect. The leadership's commitment to these principles has been instrumental in shaping the UAE image as a progressive, stable, and forward-looking nation. This approach to governance and diplomacy has enabled the UAE to establish strong international relationships and become a significant player on the global stage.

A vital aspect of the UAE foreign policy under its leadership model is its focus on humanitarian aid and development. A prime example is the UAE response to global crises, such as its significant contributions to humanitarian efforts in Yemen and providing aid to countries affected by natural disasters. These actions demonstrate the UAE commitment to global welfare and enhance its reputation as a responsible and benevolent global actor. Furthermore, the UAE leadership in renewable energy and sustainability, highlighted by initiatives like Masdar City and hosting the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) headquarters, aligns with its foreign policy goals of promoting sustainable development and environmental responsibility. These efforts contribute to the UAE soft power by showcasing its commitment to addressing global challenges.

Additionally, the UAE model of leadership and government has been pivotal in driving its public diplomacy initiatives. For instance, the establishment of cultural institutions such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and the Dubai Opera and hosting global events like the Dubai Expo 2020 are not only feats of cultural diplomacy but also reflect the leadership's vision of positioning the UAE as a hub of cultural and intellectual exchange. These initiatives have significantly boosted the UAE soft power, attracted international visitors and fostered cultural understanding. Moreover, the UAE leadership has embraced technology and innovation proactively, positioning the nation as a hub for technological advancement and a preferred destination for international investment and collaboration. This blend of cultural, technological, and diplomatic initiatives underlines the effectiveness of the UAE leadership and government model in enhancing its soft power and solidifying its position as an influential player in global affairs.

UAE political ideals may not fit soft power from a Western perspective. UAE is the most liberal Gulf nation, with better political institutions than its neighbours. The UAE has consistently ranked high on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, ranking 21st in 2017, ahead of many EU countries. The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, which evaluate countries' rule of law and regulatory frameworks, place the UAE in the top 10% for effective governance (World Bank, N.D.). Academics say, "The strength of the UAE soft power is rooted in its culture, religion, and notably liberal environment."

2.6.2   *Economic Progress*

According to Augustine (2018), numerous individuals have long been drawn to the robustness of the American economy and have either immigrated to the country or want to do so in order to live out the "American dream". Top government officials in US frequently use the staggering number of applications for visas each year as evidence of how US is seen to popular all over the world. Because of its impressive economic growth over a relatively short

period of time since independence, the UAE also enjoys a similar level of worldwide appeal. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that approximately ten million people live in the country, over 90% of whom are immigrants, mostly economic immigrants looking for a better life or more prospects for employment.

The relative scarcity of detailed case studies on the UAE, especially compared to other nations, can be attributed to a few factors. First, the UAE rapid development and emergence on the global stage are relatively recent phenomena. Unlike countries like the United States, which have had centuries to establish themselves and thus have been the subject of extensive study, the UAE transformation has occurred over just a few decades. This rapid development, while impressive, means less historical data and fewer long-term studies are available. Additionally, the UAE unique economic and political structure, characterized by a blend of traditional governance with modern economic strategies, presents a complex model that may have yet to be extensively explored in academic and policy research.

In comparing the UAE to other case studies, particularly in the context of economic progress, the nation's trajectory is notably distinct. Unlike the economic development seen in Western countries, which was often gradual and linked to industrialization, the UAE economic growth has been swift and multifaceted, primarily driven by oil wealth and later diversified into sectors like real estate, tourism, and finance. This rapid development model presents a unique case for study. For example, the transformation of Dubai from a small trading port to a global business hub within a few decades is a story of strategic vision and investment, which is quite different from the more gradual urban and economic development seen in cities like New York or London. Another aspect contributing to the fewer case studies is the UAE approach to public diplomacy and soft power, which is still evolving. While there are numerous examples of the UAE effective use of public diplomacy, such as its humanitarian aid efforts and cultural diplomacy through events like the Dubai Expo, these initiatives are relatively new

compared to long-standing public diplomacy efforts by countries like the United States or the United Kingdom. The UAE strategies are innovative and adaptive, but they have yet to be in place long enough to be studied over extended periods, which academic and policy research often requires.

The UAE consistently ranks high in global economic and social indices, including the UNDP Human Development Index. The country has actively promoted itself as a business travel destination, as shown by its rising global business accessibility rankings (Augustine, 2018). So, "the UAE led the Arab world for the sixth consecutive year, moving up 10 spots in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking to 11th place internationally in 2019 from 21st position last year" (Augustine). Due to its competitive economy, the UAE attracts many entrepreneurs. According to the 2017–2018 World Economic Forum report, it is the seventeenth most competitive economy in the world. In particular, the UAE ranked first for road infrastructure, third for airport and air transport infrastructure, fourth for seaport infrastructure, third for mobile phone subscriptions per 100 people, and fourth for infrastructure quality (UAE Government, 2018).

Besides its economic success, the UAE is a top expatriate destination, along with Germany, Singapore, and Switzerland. In 2018, HSBC Expat Explorer Survey ranked the UAE among the top expatriate destinations for the third year. Marwan Hadi, Head of Retail Banking and Wealth Management at HSBC UAE, attributed the country's high ranking to its high earning potential, which attracts professionals (Haine, 2018). This shows how diversification has made the UAE a global employer.

Finally, the UAE position as a bridge between East and West presents a unique model of international engagement that blends traditional Arab culture with modern global business practices. This unique positioning makes the UAE an exciting yet less explored case study. The nation's leadership in hosting dialogues on tolerance and interfaith issues, for example, offers

a fresh perspective on soft power, distinct from the approaches taken by Western nations. The UAE efforts in mediating regional conflicts, as well as its investment in renewable energy and sustainability initiatives, are also areas where comparative studies could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact of its policies. In conclusion, while fewer case studies focus on the UAE, the nation's unique development model, innovative public diplomacy strategies, and unique geopolitical role provide rich opportunities for future research and comparative analysis.

2.6.3 Culture

2.6.3.1 Multiculturalism and the Cultural Hub

The UAE has become the Middle Eastern cultural center, blending Western and Islamic traditions. The UAE has earned this reputation through investments in local and Islamic cultural infrastructure and partnerships with leading global cultural institutions. In 2007, the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque became a cultural landmark. One of the largest mosques in the world, it can hold 40,000 worshipers and visitors. The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Centre reported 1,400,965 worshipers, 3,417,130 tourists, 857,510 Iftar attendees, 2,496 Quran memorization students, and many charitable events (The National, 2018). This makes the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque unique: it welcomes people of all faiths, including first-time mosque visitors. It fosters interfaith dialogue and promotes the UAE's moderate Muslim image.

Qasr Al Hosn, a (1790). Abu Dhabi landmark is another UAE cultural treasure. Some of Abu Dhabi's early rulers lived and worked in the city's oldest stone building. Today, it honours the nation and preserves Abu Dhabi's history (Department of Culture and Tourism, N.D). The UAE has designated Saadiyat Island as a cultural district to promote cultural exchange with the West. This area will house Abu Dhabi's top cultural institutions (Fattah, 2001). The most famous attraction in this district is the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which opened in

November 2017 after a decade-long collaboration with France and a $1 billion construction cost.

Over 600 international works are displayed at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, including 300 on loan from 13 French museums. CY Twombly, Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, and Pablo Picasso are among its famous artists. The 2020 World Expo, symbolizing cultural exchange and human progress, was another UAE cultural achievement. Jay Wang, director of USC's Centre on Public Diplomacy, called the Expo "the largest single promotional event of a nation outside their borders" and expected 25 million visitors, positioning it as a global engagement platform (Saberi et al., 2018, pp. 44-58). The world's largest Guggenheim Museum is being built on Saadiyat Island to make Abu Dhabi a cultural and tourism hub. This project was necessary because of the Middle East's cultural rise, according to former Guggenheim director Thomas Krens (Critchlow, 2006).

The Louvre Abu Dhabi boosts UAE cultural diplomacy and soft power. UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr Anwar Gargash said the Louvre Abu Dhabi "educates the world to appreciate our diversity and common humanity, our shared ambitions and dreams." Emirati citizens can travel visa-free to 159 countries with a UAE passport (Salama, 2018), boosting its global influence.

2.6.3.2 Hosting International Events

UAE event organizers are global leaders (Vibber & Lovari, 2021). The UAE is a top destination for cultural, sporting, and business events due to its advanced transportation and communication infrastructure and abundant conference and hotel facilities. The country is proud of its world-class athletic facilities, which hosted the 17th AFC Asian Cup and the 2015 FIFA Under-17 World Cup. From 2009 to 2016, the UAE hosted the Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix annually. Over 200,000 people attended this event annually, 53% foreigners. The Grand Prix benefited the host city culturally and economically, aligning with local and national

tourism strategies. It increased global exposure, economic growth, tourism, and jobs. Formula 1 in Abu Dhabi boosted consumer spending, employment, and the secondary and tertiary sectors.

A good example is the Grand Prix held at The Circuit of the Americas (COTA) in the United States, which had a cumulative economic impact of $2.8 billion on the Austin Metro region between 2012 and 2015. (Scott, 2016). The Baku Azerbaijan Grand Prix's economic worth increased by $277.3 million in both 2016 and 2017, according to a Price Waterhouse Coopers report. More than $5.5 billion in branding revenue was generated by the Mexican Grand Prix (Avison, 2018). The UAE has consistently demonstrated its commitment to environmental sustainability and combating climate change. Its active participation in the 28th annual Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) further underscored this commitment.

The COP28 is a critical platform for the UAE to highlight its sustainability initiatives, discuss potential partnerships, and share best practices with other countries. These discussions and collaborations bolster the UAE soft power by showcasing its role as a proactive and responsible player on the global stage. As part of its commitment to the 'Year of Sustainability' in 2023, the UAE announced several key initiatives during COP28. These initiatives aim to reduce the country's carbon footprint, promote renewable energy sources, enhance water management, and encourage sustainable urban development. One key initiative is expanding the country's renewable energy capacity, particularly solar power. The UAE has already made significant strides in this sector with projects like the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, which is set to be the largest single-site solar park in the world upon completion. The commitment to further expanding renewable energy production reduces reliance on fossil fuels and positions the UAE as a global leader in renewable energy.

Hosting COP28 positions the UAE at the forefront of global climate change and sustainability discussions, reflecting its commitment to environmental stewardship and innovative solutions to global challenges. This opportunity allows the UAE to highlight its progress in sustainable development, particularly in areas like renewable energy, water conservation, and sustainable urban planning. By facilitating international dialogues and negotiations on climate action, the UAE can strengthen its diplomatic ties and enhance its credibility as a responsible and proactive member of the global community. This role in hosting a major international environmental event aligns with the UAE broader foreign policy goals. It enhances its image as a forward-thinking nation committed to addressing pressing global issues.

Furthermore, COP28 provides a platform for the UAE to demonstrate its leadership in bridging global divides on environmental matters. By bringing together diverse stakeholders – including governments, businesses, and civil society – the UAE can play a pivotal role in fostering collaborative approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The conference serves as an opportunity for the UAE to contribute to shaping global environmental policies, aligning with its strategic goal of being a key player in international affairs. The UAE successful management and outcomes of COP28 will likely reinforce its soft power, displaying its capacity to lead on global issues and its commitment to a sustainable future. This, in turn, can enhance the UAE influence in other international relations, leveraging its role in environmental diplomacy to bolster its overall global standing.

In addition, the UAE pledged to intensify efforts in carbon capture and storage technologies, aiming to reduce its carbon emissions drastically. These advanced technologies capture carbon dioxide emissions from sources like power plants and industrial processes, preventing them from entering the atmosphere. Further, the UAE is working towards enhancing its water management systems by implementing more efficient irrigation methods, improving

desalination processes, and promoting water conservation among its citizens and industries. Lastly, the country is taking strides to encourage sustainable urban development. This includes implementing greener building codes, improving waste management, and investing in sustainable transportation.

Formula 1 boosts tourism and introduces a city to new audiences, with 200,000 spectators per race and 53% foreign. The Grand Prix increased occupancy by 12% at Mexico City's 4 and 5-star hotels, and weekend visitors spent £1,600. Tickets are not included. Singapore has welcomed over 450,000 foreign visitors since the 2008 Grand Prix, boosting its tourism industry by $1.4 billion. Formula 1 also creates new opportunities in various sectors and boosts seasonal and annual employment. 640 Quebec jobs were added to help. COTA also supported 9,100 Austin jobs and paid $306 million to locals (Avison, 2018).

The UAE has used its tourism popularity to attract business and intergovernmental meetings. For instance, Sheikh Maktoum founded Dubai's annual World Government Summit in 2013. As "a global knowledge exchange program" for governments, the summit "showcases cutting-edge government services and technologies," bringing policymakers, businesses, and civil society together to shape the future (World Government Summit, 2019). This prestigious event brings world leaders and decision-makers to the UAE each year, and extensive media coverage boosts the UAE international standing. Dubai was chosen to host EXPO 2020 by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) in Paris due to its business and conference status. At least 25 million people, 70% outside the UAE, will attend this primary international business and trade fair. Besides businesspeople, the event is expected to draw many tourists. EXPO 2020 allows countries to engage in cultural diplomacy with the host nation, other participants, tourists, business partners, and investors. Each country can showcase itself to a diverse and captive audience in pavilions, creating a global village atmosphere. The Expo provides a unique

opportunity to present a positive and modern UAE image to international visitors and the global audience through extensive media coverage.

Hosting high-profile events like EXPO 2020 helps the UAE promote itself globally. UAE culture is showcased at EXPO 2020. Three of the top 500 brands are based in the UAE, including Etihad Airways and Etisalat (Trends Institution, 2018). Emirates Airlines and Etihad Airways, two of the world's top ten airlines, sponsor cricket, rugby, tennis, motorsports, horse racing, golf, and football to promote the UAE. Milan, Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid, Benfica, and Arsenal also feature the Emirates logo on their jerseys (Abdi et al., 2019).

Soft power and foreign policy legitimacy have helped the UAE gain international recognition. As is said, "If a state can make its power seem legitimate in the eyes of others, it will find less resistance to its wishes." The UAE actively participates in various international organizations and institutions to legitimize its foreign policies. GCC countries have expanded their roles, with the UAE leading global finance, energy, and climate change initiatives. Emirates hosts international organizations like the International Renewable Energy Agency. The UAE also supports UN peacekeeping and humanitarian missions to uphold international standards (Trends Institution, 2018). Initial data suggests that the UAE global image promotion is working. For six years, young adults (18–24) have voted for the UAE the country they want to live in and think other nations should emulate.

2.6.4 Education

The UAE aims to improve the world's future by being a positive influence. The nation aims to empower youth and foster optimism in the region through international educational initiatives (Masudi, 2019). His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum founded the Arab Reading Challenge. This program aims to (1) improve students' self-learning, analytical and critical thinking skills, cultural awareness, and understanding and (2) create a network of young Arab readers to strengthen Arab culture through communication and cultural

exchange. Nye (2004, 2008) highlights the US's global higher education institutions as a soft power strength. Millions of international students have attended these universities for decades, spreading American values. Nye (2004) notes that some early post-Soviet Russian political elites were educated in the US. Their education helped them advocate for a more cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries after the Cold War.

The UAE invested heavily in its educational infrastructure, including Dubai International Academic City, in 2006 (Dubai International Academic City, 2019). Over 27,000 international students attend regional and international colleges in this hub. Dubai International Academic City, the world's largest free zone for higher education and intellectual development, shows the UAE commitment to global education. Dubai International Academic City (2019) reports 32 international campuses in the UAE, including the Sorbonne and New York University. UAE universities are expected to influence their graduates, just as American universities have influenced global leadership over generations. Saeed Mohammad Al Eter, Secretary-General of the UAE Soft Power Council and Director-General of the Public Diplomacy Office at the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Future, suggests that the UAE growing number of international students, who spend four years studying for their degrees and experiencing local culture, can boost its global reputation (Masudi, 2019).

2.6.5 Tolerance

Millions of tourists visit the UAE, a liberal and moderate Islamic nation that promotes interfaith harmony and tolerance. The UAE is a top tourist destination due to its welcoming reputation. The country had 14.4 million foreign visitors in 2015, up from 2013 and 2014. Dubai had 14.9 million visitors in 2016 (Cafiero, 2019). A diverse population of over 200 ethnicities makes the UAE appealing. People can practice their religion and culture freely. In a show of tolerance, Abu Dhabi is building the first traditional Hindu temple on 13.5 acres (55,000 square meters) of land donated by His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al

Nahyan. The UAE has 45 churches (Cafiero, 2019). The government has provided more parking land as part of the Year of Tolerance.

Cultural and moral institutions like literature, arts, history, and education underpin the UAE soft power. The nation values tolerance, acceptance, collaboration, generosity, openness, justice, and good governance (Karasik, 2016). Pope Francis' 2018 visit to Abu Dhabi was a turning point in GCC history (WAM, 2017). A historic event where thousands of Christians gathered in an Arab country's public space was broadcast worldwide, giving the UAE immense soft power. Dr Jamal Al Suwaidi of the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies describes a strong link between tolerance and soft power (2019). U.S. professor Joseph Nye coined the term "soft power" in the early 1990s to describe a nation's ability to persuade and attract rather than coerce (Al Suwaidi, 2019; Global et al., 2019). Countries that promote tolerance, harmony, and acceptance while rejecting extremism and hatred are admired as role models. This virtue boosts cultures' and nations' soft power (Al Suwaidi, 2019).

In Abu Dhabi, Pope Francis signed "The Declaration" at the Human Fraternity Meeting, part of the World Conference on Humanitarian Fraternity, where over 700 religious leaders discussed interfaith cooperation (Abraham, 2019). In addition to symbolic efforts, the UAE has institutionalized tolerance through law. This includes creating the Ministry of Tolerance and Happiness and criminalizing intolerance through Federal Decree-Law No. 22015 (Antwi-Boateng & Binhuwaiden, 2017). Hate crimes and discrimination carry fines of AED 50,000 to AED 2,000,000 and prison terms of six to fifteen years under this law. The UAE actively promotes its tolerance model in extremist-prone regions (Antwi-Boateng & Binhuwaiden, 2017).

The UAE soft power strategy prioritizes human rights, particularly hate crimes and discrimination. The UAE shows its commitment to human rights and the law by imposing harsh penalties for such offences. This legal framework supports the UAE goal of creating an

inclusive society and portrays the country as progressive and responsible globally. This compliance with international human rights standards boosts the UAE global standing. The appointment of a Minister of State for Tolerance, the creation of the National Tolerance Program, and hosting events like the World Tolerance Summit further enhance the UAE reputation for tolerance.

The International Institute of Tolerance and Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashed Award for Tolerance demonstrate UAE tolerance. The Institute provides advice and policy consultation to promote tolerance, while the award develops young Arab leaders and supports intellectual, cultural, and media initiatives (Antwi-Boateng & Binhuwaiden, 2017). These efforts have promoted the UAE as a model of tolerance. Expat Academic says the UAE soft power comes from its unique location, economic stability, welcoming of all nationalities, and international reputation for tolerance. Several consider this the UAE most successful soft power strategy. Some say, "UAE economic success and position as the second-largest economy in the Arab world refill its springs of soft power." The UAE is respected and trusted worldwide as a model of tolerance. Since the UAE actively promotes tolerance and fights terrorism, extremism, and hate speech, this perception encourages visitors and residents.

2.6.6 Empowerment of women

Despite the Arab Middle East's challenging reputation for women's rights, the UAE is a staunch advocate for gender equality. Since becoming a sovereign state in 1971, the UAE has consistently prioritized women's rights. Sheikh Zayed, the country's founding president, emphasized this commitment, saying, "Nothing pleases me more than seeing Emirati women take their rightful place in society and achieve their rightful status." Nothing should stand in the way of women's progress. They deserve equal opportunities to advance to top positions based on their skills and abilities" (Al Tayer, 2018).

Hussein Ibish (2017) highlights significant advancements for Emirati women, particularly in high-paying industries such as banking and finance. By 2015, experts recognized the UAE as a Middle Eastern leader in allowing women to enter these lucrative fields. Amal Al-Qubaisi's appointment as the Federal National Council's first female deputy president highlights her accomplishments. Emirati women are constitutionally equal to men in education, employment, social and health services, and government positions. The UAE topped the Social Progress Index 2014 in "Women Treated with Respect" out of 132 countries and ranked second among Arab nations in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2017 (UAE government, 2019b).

The UAE has implemented several affirmative action policies to ensure gender equality, including mandatory female representation on all government and corporate boards, as well as a requirement that half of the Federal National Council, the country's advisory legislative body, be made up of women. An academic expert stated, "One of the UAE soft power strategies is its focus on empowering women" (UAE Government, 2019c). This commitment to female empowerment has received global acclaim, boosting the UAE international reputation. Notably, women make up nearly 30% of the UAE Cabinet, which is comparable to the UK and higher than many other countries, including India, where women account for 22% of cabinet ministers (Langston, 2017). Furthermore, in 2015, women made up 66% of the UAE public sector workforce (UAE Government, 2019c).

The UAE also earns global respect and admiration for its financial contributions to international organizations that promote women's empowerment. Since 2010, the UAE has contributed nearly $26 million to UN Women and supported the World Bank's Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative fund, which promotes female entrepreneurship in developing countries. Such financial commitments strengthen the UAE position in international forums and among friendly countries. Cameron (2017) contends that embracing gender equality not

only correlates with increased prosperity and stability, but it may also boost a country's soft power.

The UAE strategic investment in women's empowerment initiatives, both domestically and internationally, is a crucial aspect of its public diplomacy and soft power strategy. By providing substantial financial support to organizations like UN Women and the World Bank's Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative fund, the UAE demonstrates its commitment to gender equality and women's economic empowerment. These contributions are significant, as they not only aid in the advancement of women in underdeveloped nations but also position the UAE as a champion of gender equality on the global stage. This alignment with global gender equality goals enhances the UAE international image, displaying it as a progressive nation that values inclusivity and empowerment. Furthermore, the UAE efforts in promoting women's participation in the economy and society reflect a broader understanding that gender equality is intrinsically linked to economic development and stability. By actively supporting these causes, the UAE strengthens its diplomatic relationships. It enhances its soft power as nations and organizations increasingly recognize and value gender equality as a cornerstone of sustainable development and international cooperation.

2.6.7 Foreign Affairs

The UAE has shown its growing global role and commitment to humanitarian aid through foreign aid. Development aid from the UAE was the highest in the world in 2017 at DH 19.32 billion (AlKetbi, 2017). The UAE contributed over 1.31 percent of its GNI to foreign aid, exceeding the UN's recommendation of 0.7 percent. The OECD reported a 23.72 percent increase in UAE aid in 2017. Nearly half ($8.28 billion) of aid went to Asian countries, followed by $5.4 billion to African nations and $4.44 billion to European nations (OECD, 2017). The UAE five-year foreign aid strategy prioritizes women's empowerment, urban infrastructure, and transportation growth. According to the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

these initiatives aim to reduce poverty and improve living standards in disadvantaged regions, strengthening the UAE's economic ties with aid-recipient countries; notably, the UAE has stated that it will not condition humanitarian aid based on the recipient nation's legal system. The updated policy also changed how aid-receiving countries promote development (UAE Cabinet, 2016).

The UAE has strengthened its soft power through its foreign aid program and other initiatives to promote optimism and generosity. The UAE has combated regional pessimism with projects like Arab Hope Makers. The UAE Ministry of Community Development, established to improve social well-being, has similar goals (ADDCD, 2019). Academic discourse has validated UAE foreign aid as a soft power.

The UAE establishment of the Arab Hope Makers initiative is a prime example of how the nation has effectively utilized soft power in its foreign aid strategy. This initiative, which recognizes and rewards individuals and organizations across the Arab world for their humanitarian and social work, is a testament to the UAE commitment to fostering a culture of optimism and philanthropy in the region. By supporting and celebrating 'hope makers,' the UAE contributes to alleviating challenges faced in the region and promotes a positive narrative of constructive engagement and community development. This initiative, aligning with the UAE Ministry of Community Development objectives, displays the UAE approach to using soft power to inspire change and encourage a spirit of cooperation and hope. Such initiatives enhance the UAE image as a leader in humanitarian and development efforts, strengthening its international relations and reinforcing its position as a benevolent and proactive actor in the global arena. Through these efforts, the UAE demonstrates how strategic foreign aid and community development projects can be powerful tools in public diplomacy, enhancing the nation's global influence and reputation.

2.6.8 International aids

Arab and Muslim countries have now been affected by the UAE soft power in several ways. First, due to the massive financial assistance provided to various crisis and disaster areas, and second, because it continues to provide aid to struggling Islamic countries. The soft power of the UAE towards these Islamic countries is seriously impacted by this.

The concept of international aid, particularly in global health challenges like AIDS, is a complex interplay of political, economic, and ethical considerations. Lee and Zwi (2018) delve into this in their exploration of a global political economy approach to AIDS. They argue that ideological positions and vested interests significantly influence the response to AIDS at both the national and global levels. This perspective is crucial in understanding how broader geopolitical and economic agendas often shape international aid, which can sometimes overshadow the humanitarian aspect of aid. In this context, international aid becomes a tool for nations to exercise soft power by aligning aid with strategic diplomatic objectives and thereby enhancing their influence and reputation globally.

Yemen received Dh 2.97 billion from the UAE during unrest (OECD, 2017; WAM, 2017; Bridge, 2019). The UAE was among the first to organize a global response to Yemen. UAE Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum founded the International Humanitarian City (IHC) in 2003 to respond quickly to similar crises. This is the only non-profit, independent humanitarian free zone that brings together government agencies, international NGOs, and UN agencies. Dubai-based IHC provides immediate aid to countries in need worldwide (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2018).

Seckinelgin (2017) further elaborates on the intricate dynamics of international aid in examining the politics of global AIDS. His work highlights how international aid for health crises like AIDS is not just a matter of providing financial and medical assistance but also involves navigating complex political landscapes. The distribution and effectiveness of aid are

often contingent on the political environment within recipient countries and the relationships between donor and recipient nations. For countries like the UAE, this presents an opportunity to utilize aid as a means of public diplomacy, building strong relationships with recipient countries and showcasing their commitment to global humanitarian causes.

The challenges and political intricacies of responding to AIDS in different national contexts, including the BRICS nations and South Africa (Gómez & Harris 2016). These studies underscore the role of civil society and the importance of political will in effectively addressing health crises. In its approach to international aid, the UAE can draw lessons from these examples. By ensuring that its aid is not only generous but also effectively targeted and responsive to the needs of recipient countries, the UAE can enhance the impact of its aid. This approach reinforces the UAE image as a responsible and compassionate global actor, strengthening its soft power and influence in international affairs. In summary, international aid, particularly in global health challenges, is a multifaceted domain where strategic, political, and ethical considerations intersect. For the UAE, leveraging international aid as a component of its public diplomacy and soft power strategy involves providing assistance and engaging with recipient countries' complex political and social realities.

An Emirati expert (n=10) said "the UAE, through various programs, aims to instill hope in the region and empower youth." The Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (MBRGI), founded in 2015 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, have advanced the Arab world through humanitarian, developmental, and community-focused activities. MBRGI projects tackle education, environment, and governance issues. Environmental issues are addressed by fighting poverty and disease, promoting educational reform, and promoting good governance through entrepreneurship and innovation. Dubai has donated over $47.4 billion to government and non-government organizations since 1971. By

supporting nearly 130 million families, children, and youth in 116 countries, the UAE boosts its soft power (MBRGI, 2019).

2.6.9 Contributions to Peacekeeping

UAE troops first entered Lebanon in 1976 as part of the Arab Deterrent Force's peacekeeping mission. Leading coalition efforts to liberate Kuwait in 1991, the UAE Armed Forces entered an active conflict zone. Shaikh Mohammad supported a multinational force in Bosnia, indicating the UAE involvement. The UAE also airlifted injured Bosnian Muslims to Abu Dhabi and Dubai for medical care, housing, and financial assistance. In the global initiative "Restore Hope" (Salam, 2015), the UAE was one of the first nations to fund UNOSOM II, the UN's Operation in Somalia. UAE Armed Forces entered Kosovo in 1999 to end Serbian victimization. The UAE built and maintained Kosovo's 2003 Shaikh Zayed Hospital for Dh12 million after the war. The UAE Air Force has bombed ISIS fighters in Syria since August of an unspecified year. The UAE was the first Arab nation to fight in Afghanistan after 9/11 (Salam, 2015).

After that, starting in 2007, the UAE army continued to supply personnel and armored vehicles to assist the UN mission in Afghanistan. Emirati patrols assisting in the distribution of humanitarian aid came under attack from rebels, and they even had to escape a Taliban ambush. According to The Washington Post, the UAE primary goal in Afghanistan was humanitarian (UAE Embassy in WDC, 2017); the Armed Forces safeguarded assistance personnel and created a safe environment for community reconstruction, including the construction of schools, clinics, and mosques (Salama, 2015).

2.6.10 Dispute Resolution

Under Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, the UAE ended the two-decade-long conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2018. This accomplishment has

raised the UAE international standing and garnered respect. Gulf diplomats say the UAE has *"privately accepted credit for the peace pact,"* making it a regional peacemaker (Fick & Cornwell, 2018). Emirati experts say the UAE mediation of this peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea and its efforts to ease tensions between Pakistan and India are recent examples of soft power.

2.6.11 Islamic States' Alliance

The UAE joined the *"Coalition of Muslim States"* on December 14, 2015, to fight terrorism worldwide. UAE is a key partner in the U.S.-led coalition to "degrade and ultimately defeat" ISIL (Kourgiotis, 2020). At the beginning of the conflict, the UAE led airstrikes against ISIL in Syria. The UAE was the only Arab nation authorized by the U.S. to bomb ISIL targets in Syria directly. The UAE placed second in Syria airstrikes after the U.S. (Ibish, 2017, p. 31) despite not fighting in Iraq.

The UAE involvement in the "Coalition of Muslim States" represents a significant chapter in its foreign policy and military history, particularly in the context of countering the threat posed by ISIL. This participation underscores the UAE commitment to regional stability and global security. The UAE role in leading airstrikes in Syria is a testament to its military capabilities and its determination to play an active role in the global fight against terrorism. This decision also reflects the UAE strategic approach to security issues in the Middle East, where it seeks to assert its influence and contribute effectively to regional peace efforts. The UAE actions in Syria, particularly its leadership in airstrikes, underscored its commitment to a coalition that sought to address a common threat, demonstrating a willingness to engage in complex international military operations.

Moreover, the UAE involvement in the coalition aligns with its broader strategy of public diplomacy and soft power. By taking a front-line role in combating ISIL, the UAE projected an image of a robust and responsible nation committed to combating extremism. This

proactive stance in international security matters enhances the UAE standing as a reliable and capable partner in the international community. The strategic decision to participate in these operations, especially in a leadership capacity, also reflects the UAE goal of being seen as a critical player in shaping regional dynamics and contributing to global efforts to maintain peace and security.

Furthermore, the UAE participation in the coalition led by the United States represents a significant alignment with international efforts to combat terrorism. This collaboration with global powers and other Muslim states showcased the UAE diplomatic insight and ability to work within multilateral frameworks. The UAE role in this alliance clearly indicates its commitment to global and regional counter-terrorism efforts, reinforcing its position as a significant actor in international security. The UAE actions within this coalition, particularly its leadership role in airstrikes, demonstrate a balance of military capability with diplomatic engagement, which is essential in public diplomacy and international relations.

2.6.12 Membership in Multilateral Organizations

In addition to its bilateral and international climate change and renewable energy leadership, the UAE is crucial in convening global discussions. The UAE leads several key activities:

1. Global business leaders meet at the biennial World Future Energy Summit (WFES) to discuss how innovation, digitization, and market trends change energy. Over 33,000 people from 170 countries attended WFES 2018 for energy networking, discussions, and business opportunities. Over USD 15 billion in projects were announced in 2018 (Weatherby et al., 2015).

2. Over 150 nations meet at the World Energy Congress every three years to collaborate on sustainable and innovative energy solutions. The UAE hosted the 24th World Energy

Congress in 2019 (Weatherby et al., 2015), demonstrating its commitment to energy innovation.

3. Dubai Expo 2020 emphasizes sustainability. DEWA and Expo 2020 invested AED 4.26 billion ($1.16 billion) in green infrastructure. Dubai also launched the $100 million Expo Live fund to boost energy and sustainability competitiveness before the Expo (Weatherby et al., 2015).

4. A prominent international forum, the Renewable Energy Ministerial Committee includes 24 countries that emit 75% of global greenhouse gases and invest 99% in renewable energy. The UAE organized the committee's 2011 meeting and led Clean Energy Education and Empowerment (Weatherby et al., 2015).

The UAE ratified the Paris Agreement first in the Middle East on September 21, 2016. The UAE secretly promotes alternative energy technologies with other GCC and Arab League nations. This collaboration supported the GCC's 2016 Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference commitment to invest $100 billion in renewable energy (Uberoi, 2018; Weatherby et al., 2015).

2.6.13 Foreign Missions

Since its inception, the UAE has actively pursued a diplomatic upgrading strategy. The UAE are so represented overseas by a total of 308 embassies and consulates, in addition to those that are physically present within the country. As a result, the UAE currently runs 97 embassies abroad along with 20 consulates and other official offices. The capital of the nation, Abu Dhabi, is home to 119 embassies. UAE also has 72 consulates in addition to six more representative offices (MOFAIC, 2017).

The expansion of the UAE diplomatic network, with a significant presence of embassies and consulates globally, is a crucial aspect of its foreign policy and public diplomacy. This

extensive diplomatic presence facilitates the UAE engagement in international affairs, allowing it to foster bilateral relations, promote its interests, and project its influence globally. Furthermore, the UAE diplomatic missions are crucial in promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding, which are essential components of soft power. These missions serve as platforms for displaying the UAE culture, values, and achievements and facilitating business and cultural exchanges. They also play a vital role in providing support and services to UAE nationals abroad, enhancing their image as a nation that cares for its citizens wherever they are.

An integral part of the UAE diplomatic success is the notable role played by Emirati women, who have been increasingly visible and influential in the nation's foreign affairs. Emirati women hold key positions in diplomacy, including ambassadorships and other significant roles in the UAE foreign missions. This inclusion of women in high-profile diplomatic roles not only reflects the UAE commitment to gender equality but also enhances its soft power. Women diplomats from the UAE are potent symbols of the nation's progressive values and dedication to empowering women. Their active participation in diplomacy contributes to reshaping stereotypes and promoting a positive image of Emirati society. The prominence of women in the UAE diplomatic corps underscores the country's forward-thinking approach. It aligns with its broader objectives of promoting inclusivity and diversity in all sectors, further solidifying its standing in the international community.

2.6.14 Rural Women of UAE

The role of rural women in the UAE reflects the country's broader commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, a key component of its public diplomacy and soft power strategy. As Abdulkadir and Müller (2020) highlight, female leaders in the UAE have been instrumental in driving social and economic changes, including in rural areas. Rural women in the UAE have traditionally been custodians of local culture and heritage, playing a vital role in preserving and passing on traditional crafts, agricultural practices, and cultural

values. This heritage preservation is crucial in maintaining the UAE unique identity amidst rapid modernization. It has become integral to the nation's soft power, displaying its rich cultural tapestry.

Furthermore, rural women in the UAE have increasingly become active participants in the economic sphere, contributing to the diversification of the nation's economy. The intersection of gender and microfinance in the UAE, noting that rural women have been engaging in entrepreneurial activities, often supported by government initiatives and policies to empower women economically (Fadahunsi & Barake 2018). These entrepreneurial ventures not only enhance the livelihoods of rural women but also contribute to the overall economic development of the UAE. By supporting rural women's economic empowerment, the UAE demonstrates its commitment to inclusive development, which resonates positively in its international image and diplomacy efforts.

Heard-Bey (2021) provides historical perspectives on women's lives in the UAE, including those in rural areas. This historical context is essential in understanding the significant strides made by rural women in the UAE over the years. From playing traditional roles in their communities to becoming active contributors to the nation's economy and society, rural women's journey in the UAE mirrors the country's broader trajectory of progress and modernization. This evolution of rural women's roles and their increasing visibility in various sectors enhances the UAE image as a progressive nation that values the contributions of all its citizens.

In the realm of public diplomacy, the empowerment and achievements of rural women in the UAE serve as a powerful narrative. This narrative not only highlights the country's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment but also displays the UAE as a nation that respects and values its traditions while embracing modernity and innovation. The story of rural women in the UAE is thus not only a domestic matter but also a crucial aspect of

the UAE international outreach and soft power. It reflects the nation's ability to balance tradition with progress, a critical message the UAE conveys through its public diplomacy initiatives.

2.6.15 International Agency for Renewable Energy (IRENA)

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) promotes renewable energy adoption through intergovernmental cooperation. IRENA provides cutting-edge solar, wind, biomass, geothermal, and hydropower technologies, reliable research, tools, and policy guidance to countries transitioning to renewable energy. IRENA provides many valuable resources:

Renewables Readiness Assessments: These assessments, which are conducted in collaboration with local governments and regional organizations, assess the renewable energy landscape and identify strategies to accelerate national and regional deployment.

The Global Atlas: A website with maps of renewable energy potential worldwide.

Renewable Energy Roadmap: This initiative seeks to double renewable energy's global share by 2030.

The IRENA/ADFD Project Facility: This Abu Dhabi Fund for Development-funded facility uses IRENA's technical expertise to find scalable renewable energy projects in developing countries.

In 2009, the UAE achieved a significant diplomatic milestone by securing the headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). This achievement was noteworthy, as IRENA became the first international organization based in the Arab world and one of the few headquartered outside the traditional Western locations. This accomplishment aligns with the UAE broader strategy of enhancing its global presence and influence, particularly in sustainable development and renewable energy. Hosting IRENA reinforces the UAE commitment to sustainable energy and positions it as a pivotal player in the global

discourse on renewable resources. This move indicates the UAE ambition to be at the forefront of international efforts to address climate change and energy sustainability.

Additionally, the UAE role as a leading donor in international development assistance further cements its status in global diplomacy. As one of the top contributors of foreign aid to GDP, the UAE is committed to international welfare and cooperation. This generosity in foreign aid is strategically aligned with the UAE 2017–2021 strategy for international assistance, which prioritizes collaboration in sectors where the UAE can enhance its international standing as a leader. The strategy also emphasizes leveraging international projects based in the UAE and providing technical collaboration to augment the efficacy of its foreign aid contributions. Weatherby et al. (2015) underscore the strategic nature of the UAE foreign aid, which is a demonstration of generosity and a calculated move to strengthen its global influence and soft power. Through these initiatives, the UAE effectively uses its resources and expertise to contribute to global challenges while enhancing its diplomatic reach and influence on the international stage.

2.7 Role of Soft power through public diplomacy in winning the cold war

Sending samples of American culture in film, music, theatre, and literature, maintaining libraries abroad stocked with American books and magazines, and holding English-teaching sessions are a few of the keyways public diplomacy experts strengthen American soft power abroad. This was a significant component of the US government's public diplomacy campaign in the latter half of the 20th century. This global cultural initiative was backed by the US Information Agency. The information was chosen with care to illustrate in concrete terms the many advantages of American soft power. However, due to funding cuts, all of these programs had been scaled back by the end of that century (Melissen, 2011). For commercial purposes, the American private sector now exports examples, which can have either a beneficial or bad effect.

The US commercial sector's increased international distribution of American films and TV shows has given foreign audiences a more complete view of American culture. Soft power includes this. Despite its popularity, much of the content lacks context and misrepresents American society (Bayles, 2014). Arab TV airs several American TV shows, but most mimic American formats with localized content, avoiding direct promotion of US culture. According to Kraidy (2010), Arab game shows, while similar to American ones, include localized content. Hollywood movies and TV shows broadcast in the Arab world are mainly in English, even though some are translated. Hollywood films dubbed into regional languages are often adapted to local cultural norms. The Farsi-dubbed version of Shrek included local jokes and cultural references to make it more relatable to Iranian viewers. Despite its American origins, these changes made the film famous in Iran (Edwards, 2016, pp. 116–126). After integrating local content into an American framework, such media no longer carry American soft power. The American roots of these formats may still appeal to Arab observers. This cultural adaptation process also makes the media more palatable to Arab audiences by aligning with local traditions and avoiding cultural missteps. Adaptations do not hinder American public diplomacy and may even improve it.

Examples include the Iranian government's harsh response to the American commercial film Argo, which depicts Americans stranded in Tehran during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. After winning the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2013, the Iranian public and government took notice. Based on real events, the film depicts CIA agent Tony Mendez's covert rescue of six American embassy staff hiding at the Canadian ambassador's residence. Two dramatic scenes added by the Hollywood screenwriter were deemed offensive by Iranian authorities. Mendez, played by Ben Affleck, drives the Americans through a violent mob in downtown Tehran. Then, they leave Mehrebad Airport in a tense, exaggerated encounter with Iranian police and immigration officers. Even though the movie was widely pirated in Iran, the Iranian

government found these scenes humiliating and hired a French lawyer to sue the American production company. Also, in early 2013, the Iranian government held two conferences, "Hollywoodism" and "The Hoax of Hollywood," where speakers denounced the film as American Islamophobia and biased portrayals of Iran. Despite the Iranian government's objections, the film's success showed the Middle East's love of Hollywood.

One facet of our soft power is the political principles and practices of the United States. Arabs generally value American political values such as democracy, the rule of law, leadership accountability, freedom of expression, and others (Telhami, 2013). Since the Arab world as a whole lack these attributes, the American political system stands out as strengthening our soft power in the eyes of the majority of Arabs. However, recent developments in the American political system have somewhat weakened this overall optimistic picture for the Arab people.

Arabs learned about the severe treatment of American captives at Abu Ghraib, the Patriot Act, the detentions at Guantanamo, and reports of torture during the US occupation of Iraq. Many of them believed that these actions went against the purported American ideals and charged the country with being hypocritical. They also learnt about the divisiveness in the US Congress, which has diminished the appeal of our political system. At the same time, they frequently get our system's operation wrong. They find it strange that Congress has the power to veto the president's policies.

In their interactions with Arabs, US officials emphasize the benefits of American democracy while acknowledging its flaws. Additionally, they use exchange programs to bring Arab political and journalistic figures to the United States so they can observe our political system up close and develop a more nuanced and complete understanding of how it functions than they might have from news reports of its more unfavorable aspects. When Arab tourists see our politics directly, they typically leave with a more favorable opinion of it. The 2016 American election campaign presented new difficulties for public diplomacy specialists in the

US who were attempting to explain American democracy. Already, international reactions to Donald Trump's victory appear to have diminished respect for the American democratic system, a key element of American soft power, across the Middle East and elsewhere. However, it is still too early to tell whether the harm will remain as of the writing of this article (November 2016).

2.8   Chapter Summary

This chapter examined how international public diplomacy affects soft power. It described public diplomacy strategies and how governments use them. It also examined soft power in international relations, including FDI, administrative and strategic communication, communication technology, and the shift from hard to soft power. The chapter also examined soft power strategies, including shared value projects, international soft power achievements, and how soft power can be more complex than hard power. Additionally, it stressed the role of public diplomacy in soft power and the methods used to improve global relations. The study cited Soft Power and Smart Power theories. It covered UAE soft power elements.

Soft power is a multifaceted approach, so public diplomacy's impact on the UAE soft power strategy must be considered. The UAE emphasis on cultural influence, economic partnerships, and technology shows its shift from hard power to soft power in international relations. UAE investments in global cultural initiatives like the Louvre Abu Dhabi and renewable energy sectors demonstrate its soft power. These efforts have raised the UAE cultural, environmental, and global reputation. Foreign direct investment is crucial to UAE public diplomacy. The UAE Ministry of Economy reported AED 73 billion in FDI inflows in 2019, demonstrating the growing economic power.

The UAE has also strategically used communication and digital technologies for public diplomacy. Its use of digital platforms like the 'UAE Pass' app for government services highlights its focus on innovation and efficient governance. Digital diplomacy has significantly

enhanced the UAE's public diplomacy efforts, positioning it as a forward-thinking and technologically connected nation. The UAE's active participation in global organizations such as the United Nations and the Gulf Cooperation Council demonstrates its commitment to shared values and international collaboration. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the UAE provided \$6.15 billion in international aid in 2019, reflecting its dedication to global solidarity and humanitarian efforts. Additionally, the country's political stability, economic diversification, world-class infrastructure, and hosting of major global events such as Expo 2020 further underscore its growing influence. Within this framework, the UAE also maintains a model of freedom of speech that aligns with its governance priorities—allowing diverse views to be expressed while ensuring social harmony and national unity. This structured approach fosters constructive dialogue and encourages responsible expression, contributing to the UAE's overall strength in soft power. These combined efforts have helped the UAE expand its international presence, build meaningful global partnerships, and promote its national values and interests on the world stage.

CHAPTER THREE

FUNCTIONAL BOUNDARIES AND INFLUENCING FACTORS OF UAE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ON SOFT POWER

3.1   Introduction

Writing about Arab public opinion was difficult until about two decades ago due to regional government restrictions on polling data. Recently, researchers have been able to poll several Arab countries more easily. Additionally, American diplomats and intelligence officers have gained valuable Arab perspectives. People who live and work in the region and interact with Arab communities can gain a partial but informed understanding of Arab opinions. These perspectives are informed by the authors 50 years in the Arab world.

American diplomats with experience in the Arab world note that Arabs may be skeptical of U.S. foreign policies, but they generally like the U.S. In June 2004, Moroccans, Jordanians, and UAE residents expressed positive views of U.S. science and technology (90%, 83%, and 84%), American products (73%, 61%, and 63%), the education system (61%, 59%, and 63%), movies and television (60%, 56%, and 52%), freedom and democracy (53%, 57%, and 39%), and the American people (59%, 52%, and 46%). However, the same survey found negative views of U.S. policies toward Arabs (90%, 89%, and 87%), Palestinians (93%, 89%, and 90%), Iraq (98%, 78%, and 91%), and terrorism (82%, 75%, and 84% In a 2010 survey of six Arab countries—Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Morocco, and the UAE—76% watched American or European films three to seven times per week, with up to 47% watching daily. Despite these cultural influences, the U.S. was viewed as the second greatest threat to the Middle East after Israel (77% to 88%) for promoting freedom and democracy (Zogby & Maryland, 2010).

This chapter discusses public diplomacy and soft power in the UAE, its role in international relations, and the UAE soft power strategy regarding its vision, objectives, foreign policy, GCC relations, and global presence. It also analyzes the UAE Soft Power Index 2022 and suggests ways to improve it. A review of UAE government strategies concludes the chapter.

3.1.1   Enhancing UAE Soft Power

Enhancing UAE's soft power is intrinsically linked to its vigorous public diplomacy initiatives. The UAE has strategically positioned itself as a global leader in several key areas, effectively leveraging these strengths to enhance its soft power. Central to this approach is the nation's commitment to sustainability and innovation (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022). The UAE's pioneering work in renewable energy, especially the Masdar City project and its hosting of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), positions it as a forward-thinking leader in environmental stewardship. Additionally, the UAE's significant investments in cultural projects, such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and the Dubai Opera, as well as global events like Expo 2020, demonstrate its commitment to cultural exchange and global dialogue. These initiatives display the UAE's achievements and vision and serve as platforms for fostering international cooperation and understanding.

The UAE has made remarkable strides in education and technology, further bolstering its soft power. Establishing world-class educational institutions, such as New York University Abu Dhabi and the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence, and hosting international academic conferences, positions the UAE as a hub of learning and innovation. This focus on education enhances the nation's human capital and attracts international students and academics, fostering a global exchange of ideas and cultures. Moreover, the UAE's efforts in hosting and participating in technological exhibitions and forums and its advancements in space exploration, including the Mars Mission, amplify its image as a center of technological innovation. These endeavors in education and technology contribute to the nation's development and enhance its appeal and influence on the global stage.

Furthermore, the UAE's approach to public diplomacy extends to humanitarian and development efforts, which are crucial components of its soft power strategy. The UAE's contributions to international aid, particularly in response to global crises, demonstrate its

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commitment to global welfare and responsible international citizenship (Al-Mezaini, 2017).

For instance, its humanitarian aid to war-torn regions and its active role in peacekeeping and

mediation efforts in the Middle East highlight its commitment to regional stability and global

peace. These actions enhance the UAE's reputation as a compassionate and reliable

international actor. In summary, the UAE's strategic focus on sustainability, cultural

diplomacy, education, technology, and humanitarian efforts underlines the effectiveness of its

public diplomacy in enhancing its soft power. By continuously investing in these areas, the

UAE strengthens its international relations, builds long-term global partnerships, and solidifies

its position as an influential and respected player in the international community (Litsas, 2023).

3.2   UAE Soft Power Strategy

The UAE has invested in developing world-class educational institutions and attracting

international students. Prominent examples include the establishment of branch campuses of

prestigious universities like New York University Abu Dhabi[28] and the Khalifa University of

Science and Technology as can be seen in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Khalifa University

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[28] A globally recognized branch of New York University located in the UAE, established as part of the UAE initiative to become a hub for international education and academic excellence.

These initiatives aim to position the UAE as a center of knowledge and academic excellence. The UAE has undertaken various initiatives to promote sustainable development and address environmental challenges. For instance, the country has invested in renewable energy projects, including the Masdar City initiative[29] and the development of solar power plants. The UAE commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship helps enhance its reputation as a responsible global actor. Government of the UAE in 2017 (Manor and Golan, 2020). According to Matheson's (2020) assessment, the goal of the soft power strategy is to create a global national work system that will try to improve the state's reputation. The UAE has solidified its status as a regional and global economic, cultural, humanitarian, and civil power. By placing first in the UAE and tenth globally in the global impact and relations criteria, the nation has succeeded in achieving the goals of this plan (Nisbett, 2021). Soft Power Index Global Report 2023 examines culture, diplomacy, governance, education, and innovation factors to determine a country's soft power ranking. For national, regional, city, and corporate brands to succeed abroad, understanding such perceptions is essential since it enables the identification of strengths and shortcomings and the improvement of growth strategies moving forward. The capacity of a country to draw in investment and market its goods and services increases with the strength of its soft power.

3.2.1 *Soft Power Strategy Vision and Objectives*

The "UAE soft power strategy" intends to build sustainable programs, policies, and implementation frameworks with an Arab and global perspective, as well as to prepare the UAE for a system of global governance (Manor and Golan, 2020). Consider all of the state's economic, cultural, artistic, tourism, humanitarian, and social components, paying special attention to the state's civic and human weight (Bradshaw, & Howard, 2018). Building on its

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[29] A pioneering eco-city project in the UAE showcasing advanced urban development focused on sustainability and renewable energy technologies.

established reputation as one of the region's most liberal and open nations and as a hub for intellectual exchange across many ethnicities and civilizations for more than 40 years since its founding (Matheson, 2020). According to Subeh (2017), the approach is founded on a distinctive vision that the UAE is the primary gateway to the region, where cultures and ideas are entwined in an atmosphere of respect, tolerance, and human unity.

The plan has four goals: to create a cohesive state identity in all humanitarians, economic, tourism, media, and scientific fields; to improve the UAE position as a regional entryway (Nisbett, 2021). The mission is to concentrate on its cultural history as the capital of culture, art, media, tourism, and science and to create strong worldwide networks with people and organizations from the UAE to further the goals and interests of the nation. The country's reputation as a contemporary, tolerant, open, and caring nation for all peoples of the world is the second objective.

The elite ministers and officials that have extensive expertise and are highly motivated to collaborate with all segments that are coordinated with make up the chosen team of public policymakers (Subeh, 2017). Additionally, they exhibit responsibility, tenacity, invention, and a creative spirit that propelled the UAE into the ranks of developed nations in every sector, making it a hub of knowledge from which international projects sprout. One of them, according to Snow and Cull (2020), is hosting the world at Expo 2020 in Dubai. A team that received assistance from the leadership did this work. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that we will soon reach Mars and add a new, noteworthy accomplishment to the list of accomplishments of our beloved nation, the UAE. The UAE emphasis on human rights concerns, which are crucial for economic diversity, innovation, and the development of human ability as the primary component in strengthening its competitiveness, is one of the reasons for its success.

3.2.2 Emirates' Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the UAE has been a dynamic and influential force in shaping the nation's role in the international arena. Central to this policy is the UAE commitment to fostering stability, prosperity, and peace both regionally and globally. This commitment is evident in the UAE active involvement in diplomatic efforts and international coalitions to address regional conflicts and promote global security. One of the pillars of the UAE foreign policy is its emphasis on building strong bilateral and multilateral relationships. This approach is reflected in the UAE involvement in initiatives like the Abraham Accords, which normalized relations with Israel, marking a significant shift in Middle Eastern diplomacy. The UAE role in these accords demonstrates its capacity to act as a mediator and a bridge between diverse cultures and ideologies, enhancing its soft power and public diplomacy profile.

Another critical aspect of the UAE foreign policy is its focus on economic diplomacy. The UAE has strategically positioned itself as a global business hub, leveraging its geographical location and economic strengths. This economic diplomacy is underpinned by extensive trade relationships, investment in foreign markets, and hosting major international events like the Dubai Expo. The UAE approach to economic diplomacy not only bolsters its economic growth but also enables it to exert considerable influence on the global economic stage. In addition, the nation's commitment to innovation and sustainability, particularly in sectors like renewable energy, positions the UAE as a forward-thinking leader in these critical global issues.

Furthermore, the UAE foreign policy is characterized by a significant emphasis on humanitarian aid and development assistance. The UAE has been recognized as one of the world's largest donors of official development assistance relative to its national income. This commitment to humanitarian causes reflects the UAE dedication to contributing positively to global challenges and enhancing its international standing. The nation's aid initiatives, which

span various sectors, including healthcare, education, and disaster relief, provide tangible assistance to beneficiary countries and enhance the UAE reputation as a benevolent and responsible global actor. In summary, the UAE foreign policy, marked by strategic diplomatic engagement, economic diplomacy, and humanitarian outreach, plays a crucial role in its public diplomacy and soft power strategy. Through these diverse yet interconnected approaches, the UAE effectively projects its influence and values on the global stage, reinforcing its status as a key player in international affairs.

Since the UAE founding and during Sheikh Zayed's rule, soft power has played a crucial part in its foreign policy. Similar to newly established nations or countries that attained independence, the UAE was focused on constructing the internal framework of the country during its founding. However, regional and global events and developments also influenced the UAE foreign policy, with the following examples:

1. **The Gulf War:** The UAE actively participated in the liberation of Kuwait during the Gulf War, demonstrating its commitment to regional stability and the defense of its allies.

2. **September 11 and the Fight against Terrorism:** The events of September 11, 2001, led to the global recognition of the need to combat terrorism. Like other nations, the UAE embraced the concept of fighting terrorism and took measures to enhance security and counter extremist ideologies.

3. **Fall of Baghdad and Security Void:** The fall of Baghdad following the Iraq War created a security void in the region. This void increased Iran's influence across the Arab world, including countries like Lebanon, Yemen, and Iraq.

4. **Arab Spring and Instability:** The Arab Spring, a series of uprisings in various Arab countries, resulted in instability in significant cities once considered bastions of

stability, such as Egypt and Syria. The upheaval caused security challenges and disrupted the established regional order.

5. **Rise of Non-State Terrorist Organizations:** Alleged terrorist organizations and militias, operating independently from any state and using religion as a guise, experienced a rise in prominence. These groups posed significant security threats and necessitated coordinated efforts to counter their activities.

6. **Waning American Hegemony and Withdrawal:** During the Obama administration, there was a shift in the United States' approach to the region, which led to a perceived waning of American hegemony and a partial withdrawal from the area. This change in dynamics had implications for regional security and power balances.

The perception of waning American hegemony and partial withdrawal from the Middle East during the Obama administration marked a significant shift in the regional geopolitical landscape. This change presented both challenges and opportunities for the UAE in terms of foreign policy and regional engagement. The UAE demonstrated strategic adaptability and proactivity in response to the evolving dynamics. Recognizing the potential vacuum in regional leadership, the UAE stepped up its diplomatic and economic engagement within the Middle East and beyond. It sought to bolster regional stability through increased cooperation with other GCC countries and by playing a more assertive role in regional conflicts and peacekeeping initiatives. The UAE also diversified its international alliances, strengthening ties with emerging global powers and exploring new diplomatic and economic partnerships. This approach compensated for the reduced American presence and aligned with the UAE's broader objective of establishing itself as a pivotal player in regional and international affairs, capable of influencing outcomes and contributing to a balanced power structure in the Middle East.

Due to regional changes and challenges, the UAE must be more active in foreign relations. The UAE has helped resolve regional and international conflicts by expanding its partnerships.

The Emirates Policy Center (EPC, 2017) notes that the UAE has led economic development and growth efforts, which have supported its humanitarian and relief programs. These direct and indirect aid efforts have helped developing nations, especially those affected by war or natural disasters.

3.2.3   GCC-related foreign policy of the UAE

When the Iran-Iraq War broke out in 1980, the UAE formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) alongside five other Gulf monarchies: Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia. Sheikh Zayed was instrumental in the formation of the GCC. On May 16, 1976, Kuwait's Prince, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, visited the UAE to discuss the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council with Sheikh Zayed. While the Iran-Iraq War influenced its formation, the council was primarily established to promote regional cooperation and fill the void left by the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the Arabian Gulf (GN Archives, 2013). The GCC held its first meeting in Abu Dhabi on May 25, 1981, ushering in a pivotal regional alliance (GCC, 2019).

Despite recent tensions within GCC, the UAE cooperation with other Gulf monarchies remains a key component of its security strategy (GCC, 2019). The UAE has actively collaborated with members of the GCC, the League of Arab States, and other organizations to reduce regional tensions and resolve Middle Eastern conflicts. The emphasis has consistently been on peaceful conflict resolution. GCC countries' bilateral cooperation continues to strengthen, as evidenced by frequent agreements, summits, and high-level discussions and visits.

3.2.4   UAE relations with the GCC

Historically, its relations with GCC member states have significantly influenced the UAE's foreign policy. These relations are rooted in a shared cultural, historical, and geopolitical

context, which has shaped the UAE's approach to regional affairs. The establishment of the GCC in 1981, a collective response to regional security concerns following the 1979 Iranian Revolution, marked a pivotal moment in the UAE's foreign policy, emphasizing the importance of regional unity and cooperation. Over the years, the UAE has actively participated in GCC initiatives, focusing on strengthening economic, political, and security ties among member states. This collaboration is evident in various sectors, including defense, trade, and infrastructure, reflecting a collective approach to addressing regional challenges and opportunities.

The UAE's relations with the GCC have played a crucial role in public diplomacy and soft power. The UAE has leveraged its position within the GCC to enhance its regional influence and stature. By championing regional integration and cooperation initiatives, the UAE has positioned itself as a leader within the GCC. This leadership is evident in the UAE's role in mediating conflicts within the Gulf region and its efforts to foster a collaborative approach to regional issues such as economic diversification, technological advancement, and sustainable development. The UAE's active engagement in GCC affairs reinforces its commitment to regional stability and prosperity. It enhances its soft power by projecting an image of a responsible and influential regional actor. Through its strategic approach to GCC relations, the UAE has effectively used public diplomacy to bolster its regional influence and contribute to the collective strength and unity of the Gulf States.

The five GCC members have long been a top priority for the UAE as part of its foreign strategy. The Gulf countries are closer together than other nations due to their shared history and share a wide range of customs, traditions, languages, and religious beliefs. They were all a part of the British Empire and had the same borders. Following the 1979 revolution, the GCC states felt threatened by the new Iranian government, especially after the British left the region. As a result, the presidents of the GCC member countries met in Abu Dhabi in 1981 and

officially announced the GCC foundation. The member nations have cultivated a tight bond over time (Gulf News, 2011).

In June 2017, the UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia decided to sever all ties with Qatar, both diplomatically and commercially (WAM, 2017). This dealt one of the largest blows to the cooperation of the GCC members. Nearly 500,000 Iranians are estimated to reside in the UAE according to unofficial estimates, with a large percentage of them working as traders and businesspeople in a variety of sectors, particularly those involving food, raw materials, iron, steel, electronics, tyres, household goods, and other materials (Hellyer, 2001, p. 160-168).

3.2.5 *Foreign Policy of the UAE in the MENA*

3.2.5.1 *Arab League/MENA[30]*

The UAE prioritizes close ties with Arab and Muslim nations in its foreign policy. UAE foreign policy is affected by the Arab-Israeli conflict (Hellyer, 2001). The UAE participated in the Arab oil boycott during the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict politically and commercially to pressure Israel-supporting importers (Venegoni, 2019). Through the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development, Palestine relied on the UAE financially. After President Sadat signed a peace accord with Israel in Jerusalem in 1979, the UAE severed ties with Egypt between 1970 and 1980. Thus, the Palestinian issue has always shaped UAE foreign policy (Hellyer, 2001, p. 173).

UAE extensive foreign aid contributions, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa region, underscore a significant aspect of its foreign policy: using humanitarian and development assistance as a tool of diplomacy and soft power. This approach aligns with the UAE vision of fostering stability, peace, and regional development. The UAE aid efforts are multifaceted, encompassing emergency humanitarian relief, long-term development projects,

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[30] A regional organization of Arab countries in and around North Africa and the Middle East, focusing on economic, cultural, and political collaboration and significantly influencing the UAE foreign policy strategies.

and contributions to international stabilization funds. For instance, the UAE substantial commitment to rebuilding Iraq, which includes financial aid, medical assistance, and infrastructure development, reflects its strategic approach to contributing positively to post-conflict recovery and stability. This helps address immediate humanitarian needs and lays the groundwork for long-term societal and economic recovery.

Moreover, its responsiveness and the breadth of its impact characterize the UAE approach to foreign aid. The aid provided to Egypt to support economic stability and growth exemplifies the UAE recognition of the interconnected nature of economic prosperity, stability, and security. Similarly, the UAE support for Syrian refugees demonstrates a commitment to addressing the humanitarian fallout of regional conflicts. The UAE plays a vital role in alleviating the suffering of displaced populations by providing funds for essential services such as healthcare, education, and sanitation. While humanitarian, these actions also enhance the UAE international standing and influence. By acting as a responsible and proactive member of the international community, the UAE reinforces its reputation as a benevolent and effective global actor. This strategic use of foreign aid and humanitarian assistance is critical to the UAE soft power strategy, enabling it to build strong, positive relationships with countries worldwide.

According to estimates from governmental and non-governmental organizations, the UAE has received approximately $47.4 billion in aid since its inception in 1971 (UAE Embassy in Washington, 2017; Hubbard, 2016). According to the UAE Embassy in Washington, DC (2017), these funds have supported various charitable, humanitarian, and development initiatives. A vital component of the UAE foreign policy is its ongoing commitment to providing substantial support and assistance throughout the region via various mechanisms. The UAE Embassy in Washington, DC, emphasizes that the country has invested tens of billions of dollars in humanitarian aid and regional stabilization efforts over the last decade.

Syria: The UAE has supported Syrian refugees since 2011. 2014 it gave over $60 million to the UN-coordinated Regional Response Plan (RRP) and the Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan. These funds provided refugees in neighboring countries and internally displaced Syrians with food, healthcare, water, sanitation, and education. The UAE has also accepted tens of thousands of Syrian refugees, including relatives of UAE citizens (UAE Embassy in WDC, 2017).

Iraq: The UAE donated $60 million to the Iraq Stabilization Fund for reconstruction. This aid includes money, in-kind donations, medical services, hospital renovations, humanitarian aid, and police training. Since 2003, the UAE has forgiven Iraq's over $7 billion debt.

Yemen: The UAE has provided over $1 billion in humanitarian and reconstruction aid. This significant contribution has helped rebuild thousands of schools, hospitals, and other vital infrastructure in Southern and Eastern Yemen.

Egypt: The UAE is supporting Egypt more to promote stability and growth. Through Egypt Task Force initiatives, Egypt received $4.63 billion and $3.2 billion in 2013 and 2014, making it the largest recipient of UAE development aid.

Libya: For five years, the UAE has provided hundreds of tons of food, medicine, medical supplies, tents, and blankets to Libyans (UAE Embassy in Washington DC, 2017).

The UAE donated $4.9 billion in 2014, maintaining its position as the world's largest ODA donor. According to the OECD, the UAE was again the top donor.

3.3   UAE position in International soft power index 2023

With its Soft Power Score rising by 3.2 points and Expo 2020 Dubai accounting for 61.2% (2 points) of the improvement, the UAE climbed five spots in the Index. The impact of Expo 2020 is still being felt, as evidenced by the remarkable increases in several categories in

the Brand Finance Global Soft Power Index 2023. Concrete proof of the Expo's continuing influence is provided by the consultancy's study, cross-referenced with unique survey data gathered before, during, and after the Expo. Increase in UAE Nation Brand Value. Expo 2020 was a significant factor in the UAE Nation Brand Value, increasing from $773 billion in 2022 to $957 billion in 2023, or 11.2% ($20.6 billion). Overall, this helped move the UAE up to position 16 in the Brand Finance Nation Brands Report 2023. UAE brand strength grew from 76.7/100 to 78.4/100 in the Nation Brands Report 2023. Expo 2020 contributed 63.8% (1.1 points) of the overall gain. The projected increase in GDP for 2023 is 2.2% of total GDP ($10.2 billion more than total building expenditures and investments of $7 billion). Expo 2020 contributed 61.2% (2 points) of the improvement in UAE soft power score in the Brand Finance Global Soft Power Index 2023 from 52.0/100, raising it by 3.2 points. UAE total ranking rose by five positions, moving it into the top 10.

Due to a global survey with more than 100,000 participants, the UAE has entered the Top 10 of the Brand Finance Global Soft Power Index for the 2023 iteration for the first time. Out of the top 18 nations, the UAE improved its position the most and came in second only to the USA regarding a rise in total points.

The UAE rise in the 2023 Brand Finance Global Soft Power Index, where it entered the top 10 for the first time, shows its well-implemented soft power strategy. Expo 2020 Dubai's success in boosting the UAE brand value is particularly noteworthy. The UAE national brand increased from $773 billion in 2022 to $957 billion in 2023 thanks to the Expo. The Expo had significant effects beyond financial gains. It gave the UAE a global platform to showcase its innovations, cultural diversity, and forward-thinking vision, which spoke to audiences worldwide. UAE brand strength and soft power scores increased due to this effective representation of the nation's capabilities. The global survey, with over 100,000 participants, shows the UAE growing international influence. Its careful public diplomacy and global

engagement helped the nation rank. The UAE extraordinary soft power index performance shows how it has used major international events like Expo 2020 to project its global image. These events have helped establish the UAE as a global powerhouse. Strategic soft power through high-profile global engagements has improved the UAE ranking, global influence, and diplomatic presence.

3.3.1 International Soft Power Index 2023

The UAE reached a milestone by ranking 10th in the 2023 Global Soft Power Index. According to the report, UAE remains the top Middle Eastern country for the fourth year. The UAE rose five places in the global rankings this year, rising 3.2 points to 55.2. The report highlights the Gulf nation's rising reputation and global influence. Brand Finance Chairman and CEO David Haigh said the UAE rapid national vaccination program during the COVID-19 pandemic gave it an edge. This proactive health response improved the UAE business and commerce image and "future growth potential," ranking third globally. Expo 2020 promoted the UAE as a global trade hub, further strengthening its position.

The UAE is also one of the most "generous" nations, providing foreign aid in proportion to its GDP, bolstering its soft power. The survey shows that UAE governance and international relations are improving, and rankings are expected to rise. Hosting COP 28, the world's largest climate conference will put the UAE in the spotlight in 2023. The Emirates Mars Mission has given the UAE the eighth spot in the investment in space exploration[31] category. The historically oil-dependent economy keeps upscaling its dedication to innovation, diversification, and financial investment in a more sustainable future. The UAE has realistic optimism about the future because its leadership has a clear strategic vision. It attempts to

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[31] Refers to the United Arab Emirates' significant financial and technological commitment to space exploration, including notable projects like the Emirates Mars Mission. These investments position the UAE as a leading player in space research and investigation, contributing to its global reputation in scientific and technological advancement.

obtain all the necessary tools to prepare for the post-oil age. According to a strategy developed by President H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and inspired by the UAE Centennial Plan 2071, the nation is moving forward apace. This implies that the nation will follow a well-defined path to attaining its objectives over the following 50 years. When the UAE commemorates its 100th birthday, it will have achieved a high position among developed nations and served as a role model for the region and beyond.

UAE impressive rise to the 10th position in the 2023 Global Soft Power Index reflects a strategic blend of innovative initiatives and proactive international engagement, significantly enhancing its global reputation and influence. This achievement, marked by leading the Middle Eastern countries in the index, results from several key factors. The UAE early and efficient response to the COVID-19 pandemic, notably its widespread vaccination program, has been pivotal in maintaining positive global perceptions, particularly in business and commerce. The success of Expo 2020 in Dubai, highlighting the UAE as a nexus of international trade, further cemented its position on the world stage. The country's commitment to significant global issues, such as hosting COP 28 and investing in space exploration with the Emirates Mars Mission, showcases its dedication to innovation and sustainable future development. These endeavors, aligned with the long-term vision outlined in the UAE Centennial Plan 2071, demonstrate the UAE commitment to transitioning from an oil-dependent economy to a diversified, knowledge-based economy, positioning it as a model of development and progress in the region and beyond.

The UAE has established a reputation as a major regional center for logistical and financial services. It is regarded as a center for re-exports and a prime location for travel, business, employment, and habitation. As a result, stability is the foundation of the nation's security plan. The stability of the UAE is a topic of attention on a worldwide scale as its links

with other countries deepen. This aligns with the UAE efforts to build its reputation as a dependable partner for powerful nations outside, particularly the United States.

3.3.2 *Globalization and transboundary problems*

The globe is now going through a number of transboundary problems as a direct result of globalization. The contemporaneous influence that they have on a great number of nations, geographies, and parts of the economy is one of their defining characteristics. The COVID-19 contagion is an appropriate illustration of this sort of catastrophe that started with difficulties relating to health and affected, among others, the economy, state, and society. Because of its global platform, it has prompted the basic question of whether or not governments and human rights organizations should coordinate their efforts. During this time of difficulty, the UAE has proved its commitment to the global community[32]. According to Alexander et al. (2021), the vaccination has evolved into an interdisciplinary subject in the realm of health diplomacy. Consequently, by adjusting one's behavior to reflect the new circumstances. The UAE has a potential to expand its role and standing in the globe via the use of vaccine diplomacy. The pursuit of humanitarian, geopolitical, institutional, and international objectives via the use of vaccines is an example of vaccine foreign relations. The UAE made advantage of its location as a logistical center and quickly developed close collaboration with several vaccine makers. Because of this, the UAE has not only been able to reach one of the highest immunization levels in the world. However, it has also developed into an international hub for the transportation and storage of vaccines. Both Abu Dhabi and Dubai play an essential role in the distribution of immunizations across the world. Dubai airport can handle 300 tons per day and store 10 million dosages in processing depots.

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[32] Refers to the international network of nations and organizations working collaboratively on shared challenges and opportunities, emphasizing global interconnectedness and cooperation. Highlights the United Arab Emirates' active engagement and contributions to international efforts, particularly in health diplomacy and crisis response, enhancing its stature in the global community.

The contemporary era of globalization has brought forth complex transboundary challenges that simultaneously impact numerous nations and sectors, a prime example being global health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. These situations underscore the essential role of health diplomacy, highlighting the need for coordinated international responses to manage such problems effectively. In this context, the UAE has demonstrated a strong commitment to global health through its active participation in vaccine distribution. This approach, known as vaccine diplomacy, involves leveraging vaccine distribution as a strategic tool to build and strengthen humanitarian, geopolitical, and institutional relationships worldwide. The UAE, capitalizing on its position as a logistical hub, has facilitated close collaboration with various vaccine manufacturers. This initiative has enabled the UAE to achieve one of the highest vaccination rates globally and transform it into a critical center for the international transport and storage of vaccines. The infrastructure at Dubai's airport, capable of handling significant quantities of vaccines daily, has been instrumental in reinforcing the UAE role in global health efforts, particularly in distributing COVID-19 vaccines across various regions.

3.3.3 *Potential Impact of Covid-19*

The UAE was one of the first nations in the world to become part in the worldwide response to the COVID-19 epidemic when it broke out. By the middle of the year 2021, the UAE had sent 2,154 tons of medical assistance to 135 different nations through 196 different planes. In conjunction to this, they established makeshift medical facilities in the countries of Guinea-Conakry, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, and Sudan. In Turkmenistan, the UAE set up a fully functional mobile clinic. In addition, the Dubai International Humanitarian City offered assistance to 117 other nations. According to Alexander et al., in September of 2020, Abu Dhabi initiated a public-private collaboration in the logistics industry that was given the name Keep hoping Collaboration. The Abu Dhabi Department of Health, Abu Dhabi Ports

Company, Etihad Cargo, Rafed, and SkyCell are working together on this program as part of a collaborative effort (Scott, 2016). Over six billion doses of vaccinations are within distribution capacity. The UAE hopes to expand its role as a soft power in the international arena by adjusting to the changing circumstances in order to better position itself there. This will be accomplished via the establishment of a new partnership deal between Sinopharm CNBG and G42 of Abu Dhabi, which will be responsible for the yearly production of 200 million dosages of immunizations inside the UAE. The UAE will become into not just a distributor but also a worldwide manufacturer of pharmaceuticals thanks to this strategy. The COVID-19 epidemic has intensified concerns relating to food and poverty. As a result, the UAE has been involved in a great deal of activities. The "100 million Meals" campaign is one of these initiatives. Food assistance was sent to thirty different nations throughout the continents of Africa, South America, Asia, and Europe because of this operation. Because of this campaign, a total of 216 million sandwiches have been given out to those in need. As a result, the target has been surpassed by a factor of more than two. This initiative has made it possible to create a specific collaboration platform that would include funders from 51 different nations as well as many various global, provincial, and local organizations. The world-famous companies that are based in the UAE are helping to drive global change within their respective fields. Etisalat's achievement of being the fastest network, ADNOC[33] status as a pioneer in sustainability innovation, DP World's position as a leader in logistics innovation, and Emirate's role as a flag bearer are just few examples. Over 190 countries from across the globe will be able to participate in Expo 2020, which will be hosted in the UAE. This is part of the UAE ongoing effort to showcase the country as the entry point to the region (Salisbury, 2018).

Over the course of its history, which began in 1971 and will conclude in 2019, the UAE has contributed more than USD 80 billion to various international causes. In 2019, the total

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[33] One of the world's largest energy companies measured by both reserves and production

amount of foreign assistance provided by the UAE surpassed 8 billion USD. Since 2013, the UAE has been the leading contributor nation worldwide for humanitarian assistance. In light of this, the present investigation will be addressed throughout this book. What kind of a part does UAE international assistance play, and how important is it, in the process of putting the Soft Power Strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into action? According to the findings of the study, humanitarian assistance is the outcome of an adaptation in response to development in the world environment. This is in reference to the shifts in the state of world affairs that took place in 2001 and then again, in 2011, at the beginning of the so-called Arab Spring, which had a significant influence on the local, commercial, and militarily exposure to international relations. This study has a considerable impact on the UAE policies regarding the provision of help to other countries.

At the turn of the 21st century, it became clear that the predicament in the Middle East was an extremely complicated one. Especially considering that, at the same time, the Western world was also trying to figure out its position and function in the globe after the Cold War. As part of its strategy to bolster its standing in both the Middle East and North Africa, the UAE has undertaken a number of different projects. The UAE took on several international responsibilities in order to put this idea into practice. To begin, they took on the position of the benefactor, investing resources in the growth and success of favorable partners in order to further their own economic interests. Second, the UAE took on the role of promoter, scouting for various chances to bring on board new partners. It is possible to draw the conclusion that the execution of the UAE foreign assistance strategy has helped to boost the political control of the nation in international relations. Because of this, the UAE was able to pursue its objectives in a manner that was both more effective and on a worldwide platform.

3.3.4   Aim Analysis at Global Scale

The primary objective of this charitable organization is to alleviate human suffering on a global scale, particularly that of the destitute, widows, and children who are without parents. In addition to this, it is involved in the distribution of humanitarian supplies in regions that have been ravaged by natural catastrophes and armed conflicts. The UAE extended major assistance to the Western Balkans around the turn of the century in order to help the area meet the increased security problems it faced in the 1990s. Therefore, the UAE assisted the conclusion of the war by increasing funding to Kosovo in the year 1999. Another illustration of this would be the loans and grants that the Abu Dhabi Development Fund has granted to Albania (ADFD) (Cara, 2012). In addition, the UAE has overtaken Serbia as the leading investor and has become the country that gives the most money to non-EU countries in Macedonia. Since the very inception of the UAE statehood, humanitarian assistance has developed into an important component of the country's foreign policy. Helping people become more adapted to new difficulties. Since that time, the UAE has taken up the position of the benefactor but outside the Middle East.

In 2011, the year that is considered the beginning of the Arab Spring, International Humanitarian City relocated to a site in Dubai that was considered logistically advantageous. In addition to that, it underwent an expansion and saw a 300 percent growth. In the same year, there was also the beginning of the crisis in Syria. As a direct consequence of this situation, the UAE contributed USD 700 million to aid Syrian refugees. In addition, the UAE gave humanitarian support to Syrian citizens who were forced to relocate inside the nation and extended economic and technical help to Jordan, which was the country that took in the largest number of refugees from Syria. In addition, more than 100,000 Syrian nationals travelling with Syrian passports landed in the UAE. As a result, the number of people seeking asylum in the UAE rose to almost 244,000. Putting it among the greatest groups of Syrians forced to flee

their country. Located in Abu Dhabi and given the name 'Hedayah,' the Worldwide Training Center for Counternarcotic Violent Extremism was inaugurated by the UAE Ministers of International Trade and Industry in the month of December 2012.

The UAE created the Department of International Technical Cooperation (MICAD)[34] in 2013. This was done in order to increase the efficiency and significance of the UAE's international assistance. The structures of the new ministry were expanded to include the Development Aid Coordination Office. The position of Minister of Economic Technical Cooperation has been given to Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi[35]. She had held the position of Ambassador of Foreign Trade up to that point. Additionally, Sheikha was the first woman to ever serve as a minister in the UAE parliament. She is regarded as one of the most powerful women in the world, as stated by Forbes magazine. The UAE became one of the world's greatest contributors in 2013, making them one of the top five countries overall. During that time period, the UAE surpassed the United Nations' aim of allocating 0.7 percent of its economic output to assistance.

3.3.5 *Need to shift the dynamics of UAE*

It is also important to note that the shift in the dynamics of the UAE foreign assistance is connected to the adaptability of the government to its international environment and work circumstances that have emerged globally. As a result, the so-called Arab Spring and the ensuing repercussions it brought about had an effect on the humanitarian diplomacy practiced by the UAE. In September 2013, because of activities carried out by the Friends of the Syrian People Group. The distribution of money to humanitarian relief organizations working in Syria is the goal of this particular fund. Another example of this would be Egypt, which went through

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[34] MICAD (Ministry of International Cooperation and Development) A government department established by the UAE in 2013 to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the country's international development and aid efforts."
[35] A prominent Emirati political figure is known for being the first female minister in the UAE history and a leading advocate for economic and technical cooperation on a global scale.

political transitions in 2013 that benefited the UAE position. This year, the nation dramatically boosted the amount of money it sent to international help by 375 percent, of which over 78 percent went to Egypt. In 2019, the political climate inside Egypt's borders continued fraught with tension. In spite of this, the status of the nation's economy has improved significantly from before 2014. When evaluating the UAE commitment to bolstering ties with Egypt beginning in 2014, particularly provisions for foreign assistance, its impacts should be taken into consideration. Since President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi took office on June 7th, 2014, this has been the case. The nature of the connections between the Emirates and Egypt has become more strategic (Ibish, 2017). Since then, there have been over 20 visits from people in high-level positions.

On July 1, 2014, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)[36] welcomed the UAE as a new member of its Development Assistance Committee (DAC)[37]. As a result, the UAE got a wider chance to engage in investment promotion debates and programs. Since the beginning of the NATO Alliance to Defeat ISIS in September 2014, the UAE has been an active participant in the coalition's efforts. In July of 2015, the UAE and the United States collaborated to create the 'Sawab' Centre in Abu Dhabi with the intention of providing assistance for the aforementioned effort. Combating extremism is one of its primary responsibilities. Additionally, the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS)[38] in Iraq has the backing of the UAE. It was established in 2015, and the United Nations Development Program is in charge of its management (UNDP). The advent of conflict in Yemen in 2015 made an already critical situation for civilians and aid workers much worse. Yemen is already facing a humanitarian catastrophe. Yemen was the recipient of help that was sent from the UAE. The

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[36] OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development): An international organization promoting policies to improve people's economic and social well-being worldwide.
[37] DAC (Development Assistance Committee): A forum of the OECD that brings together major donor countries to collaborate on aid and development efforts.
[38] FFS (Funding Facility for Stabilization): Initiated by the UNDP to support stability and recovery in regions affected by conflict, particularly in Iraq.

UAE had the highest ratio of Official Development Assistance to Gross National Income (GNI) in 2015, with 1.09 percent (USD 4.39 billion). At the same time, the UAE was one of the top ten countries worldwide that contributed the most money to infrastructure development (ODA). The Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiative[39] as officially introduced into the world on October 4th, 2015, by the UAE. The provision of assistance to those in need has emerged as an important component of this endeavor. The UAE brand should be strengthened across the globe as well as the reach of soft power should be expanded (Alabdalkarim, 2019). The new project was timed to coincide with the United Nations' announcement of the 2030 Agenda, also known as the SGDs, which took place 10 days prior to the launch of the new initiative. The UAE has made the aim of sustainable development the primary criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of its international assistance. In this manner, the UAE, by virtue of its engagement to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its adaptation of its foreign policy to new problems.

The 2016 merging of the Ministry of Intergovernmental Economic Co-operation (MICAD) with the Department of State demonstrated the rising prominence of foreign assistance in UAE world politics. Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation were renamed the Ministry of International Trade and Industry when the new ministry was created. Reem Al Hashimy, the Minister of State for International Technical Cooperation, was also a part of the administration. A year later, in December of the same year, the UAE implemented its foreign assistance policies. "Helping to promote Global Peace and Prosperity: UAE Development Aid Policy, 2017–2021" is the title of the paper and is based on the UAE assistance for Sustainable Development, which the United Nations has promised to attaining by 2030. Humanitarian assistance in accordance with the 2030 Agenda For sustainable development is a key component of UAE foreign aid strategy. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and

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[39] Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiative: A comprehensive humanitarian and development initiative launched to improve lives globally through various programs and projects.

Coordination (OECD)[40] classified the UAE as the world's greatest international aid contributor in 2017.

The UAE is laying down strong foundations that will enable the expansion and profitability of economic sectors that are knowledge-based and focused on the future. In the meanwhile, it is working hard to strengthen its position as a worldwide hub for enterprises that are centered on innovation, artificial intelligence, and entrepreneurialism (Burweila, & Nomikos, 2019). In order to accomplish this goal, the UAE has implemented a variety of strategies that produce sustainable economic development based on science and innovative technology. These strategies also focus on capitalizing on extraordinary talent, skills, and competences. In the previous five years, a significant amount of progress has been accomplished, as seen by the expansion of many economic sectors that contribute to a more forward-looking economy. Between the years 2014 and 2018, the information and media industry had a composite growth rate of 27.2 percent, which is equivalent to an annual increase of 5.4 percent (Figure 3.2).

Annual average growth rate Information and Communications Sector	Annual average growth rate Education Sector	Annual average growth rate Professional, Scientific and Technological Activities	Annual average growth rate Manufacturing Industries
5.4%	5.6%	1.9%	4.2

Figure 3.2: Annual average growth rate in various stream

The education and scientific sectors, along with technical and scientific fields, projected cumulative growth rates of 28.2% and 9.5 percent shares, respectively, with average annual growth rates of 5.6 percent and 19 percent. Manufacturing also grew 4.2 percent annually. These industries contributed nearly 18% of the UAE real GDP in 2018. HH Sheikh Mohammed

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[40] OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development): an international organization that works to build better policies for better lives, focusing on global economic progress and world trade.

bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai launched "UAE Centennial 2071." in 2017. This comprehensive strategic initiative aims to make the UAE the world's leading nation by 2071, the UAE 100th anniversary. HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the "UAE Centennial 2071" in 2017 with a bold future vision. This initiative aims to make the UAE the world's top nation by 2071, the country's centenary. The plan promotes growth and excellence in education, science, and technology to make the UAE a global leader by its centennial. This ambitious plan stems from a desire to honor the legacy of the nation's founding fathers while envisioning a future that continues its ethos of ambitious development and progress. The rationale behind this long-term strategy is to ensure sustainable development, innovation, and a diversified economy that is not solely reliant on oil. It also aims to cement the UAE position as a global leader in various sectors, including technology, education, and healthcare, thus ensuring a high quality of life for its citizens and residents. This forward-thinking approach reflects the UAE commitment to continuous improvement and excellence, positioning the nation as a regional leader and a global benchmark in holistic and sustainable development. The Centennial is built on four fundamental pillars, including good education and governance that is focused on the future. Economy that is varied and founded on information, as well as a community that is joyful and harmonious. The UAE has set its sights on being a worldwide center for attracting the finest minds, ideas, and talent. In addition to providing the best business prospects, a stable environment, and an advanced infrastructure, the UAE hopes to become the best economy in the world (Augustine, 2018). The UAE continues to solidify its position as a global leader in a variety of industries thanks to the consistently growing investments made in areas like artificial intelligence, bioengineering, nanotech, scientific method, and multi-dimensional combined total industrial production.

In December 2019, the UAE Ministry of Economy introduced the Fifty Economic Plan with the goal of constructing an economy that is focused on the future. This document, which is a component of the strategy known as "Towards the Next 50," functions as a road map for economic endeavors for the decades to come. The plan is comprised on five fundamental pillars. Integrated economy, entrepreneurial, small, and medium-sized businesses, tourism, foreign direct investments and exports, and recruiting and keeping talent are some of the pillars of the international economy. The plan's objective is to bring about a significant change in the state of the national economy by the year 2030 and promote the expansion of the GDP[41] by fostering the development of a thriving local business climate and providing opportunities for UAE-based enterprises to prosper and take the global lead. The introduction of new markets and the establishment of a proactive legislative environment that supports economic objectives are the cornerstones of this ecosystem with an eye toward the future. Other foundations of this industry include industries such as space technology and digital recreation. Concurrently, the Ministry is working to make it simpler and less difficult to do business encouraging investment while safeguarding successful businesses and providing assistance for those who do so.

In 2018, the Emirates blockchain Strategy was initiated, with the purpose of harnessing, using, and monetizing on cutting-edge technology for the good of society. In addition, the UAE government is moving all of its transactions on blockchain platforms, which is another step toward improving the efficiency of government operations. The strategy focuses on ensuring the satisfaction of people and residents, enhancing the effectiveness of the government, and advancing legislative initiatives that would significantly alter the way the federal government performs its functions as well as the UAE position as a global leader in the area of information transport and protection. This will help people, organizations, and government ministers

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[41] GDP (Gross Domestic Product): A monetary measure of the market value of all final goods and services produced in a country during a specific period, often used as an indicator of economic health.

enhance their capacities, save time, effort, and money, and position the UAE to emerging as one of the most technologically sophisticated countries poised to embrace change.

Instead of depending only on oil resources, the UAE has devised a plan called the Green Growth Strategy that strives to achieve sustainability across economic, social, and environmental domains. The UAE has set its sights on being a world powerhouse in the field of green economy, as well as a hub for the sale and re-export of environmentally friendly goods and technology as well as to provide a setting that is ecologically sound and supportive of economic development over the long run. The strategy consists of a collection of practices and initiatives that cover a variety of domains, including energy, agricultural, investments, and sustainability transportation (Kauppi, 2013), in addition to new environmental and urban regulations that are geared toward enhancing the standard of living in the nation. There are six primary pillars that make up this technique. green technology, solar buildings, governmental policies that encourage investment in a renewable energy industry, green cities, adapting to the effects of global warming, living greener lifestyles, and coping with the repercussions of climate change.

The UAE Strategy for the Fifth Industrial Revolution aims to contribute to a competitive economic development by bolstering the country's position as a global hub for the subsequent agricultural revolution. This will be accomplished through the development of futuristic applications that combine material, digital, and biotechnological latest technology. This is in addition to using technology and resources to better serve the people of the community and provide enjoyment to the general populace. The implementation of a variety of programs, as well as genomic doctors and health genomic tourism[42] as well as the enhancement of economic stability via the deployment of a sharing transformation, are the primary pillars of this approach. In addition, the plan calls for the research and development of

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[42] Genomic Doctors and Health Genomic Tourism: Innovative approaches in healthcare focusing on personalized medicine using genetic information and promoting health-related travel for genomic services.

cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence[43] biotechnology, the internet of things, and 3D printing[44] in order to foster productivity expansion.

The Circular Economy Policy offers guidance toward the environmentally responsible economic planning as well as the most effective and productive utilization of natural and resources of the country. This is accomplished through into the implementation of the most effective methods and technologies of environmentally sustainable development goal (Kavaratzis, & Kalandides, 2015). This is done so that both the present generation and future generations may enjoy a lifestyle of high quality. Increase the number of natural resources that are used effectively and cut down on waste as much as possible. The policy also seeks to improve environmental health and to encourage the private sector to adopt cleaner company's production practices and technologies. This, in conjunction with the goal of acknowledging the UAE perspective of becoming a leader in environmentally friendly development, is one of the policy's overarching goals. One of the most significant results of the strategy is that it has resulted in a significant increase in economic profits for the nation. Reducing the strains on the ecosystem, guarantees a steady supply of raw resources and improving our profitability are all priorities and fostering innovation, bolstering economic development, and generating employment opportunities are all important goals.

Because of its extensive efforts to provide a future-focused and highly advanced facility that is competent of enhancing the living conditions for individuals and communities, the UAE is one of the nations that is best prepared to deal with technology advancement. In particular, this is the case in light of the fact that it is one of the international locations that has made the most progress toward achieving this goal in accordance with the goals of the UAE Centennial 2071. This plan, which consists of eight strategic goals, is regarded as the first of its type to be

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[43] Artificial Intelligence: A field of computer science dedicated to creating intelligent machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, revolutionizing various sectors.
[44] 3D Printing: A manufacturing process that creates a physical object from a digital design by layering materials used in industries ranging from healthcare to manufacturing.

implemented on a worldwide scale. There are five topics and a series of projects that are aimed at using artificial intelligence in the process of creating the essential facets of the nation's infrastructure, such as education and the economy. In addition to that, it seeks to increase the efficiency of the administration and the happiness of the populace. Develop an exciting new regional market that has a strong potential for economic growth, provide support for initiatives taken by the corporate companies, and increase overall productivity. The following industries are among those that will be targeted: transportation, healthcare, outer space, alternative resources, water, and technology; education; the environment; and traffic.

In 2017, the UAE introduced its Energy Strategy 2050[45] as well as the nation's unified energy strategy. It strikes a balance between production and consumption while taking into account global environmental obligations. The goal of the plan is to reduce the amount of energy that is wasted by individuals and businesses by forty percent. This is accomplished by creating an economic climate that is both appealing and favorable, which stimulates the expansion of all industries. In addition to this, it aims to raise the proportion of renewable energy in the overall energy mix from 25 percent to 50 percent, which would result in cost savings of around 700 billion AED by the year 2050. The UAE plans to spend a total of 600 billion UAE Dirhams (AED) between now and 2050 in order to fulfil sustainable development and satisfy the rising demand for energy. The energy mix will be comprised of the following components in accordance with the plan as follows: 44 percent from sustainable energy, 38 percent from gas, 12 percent from clean coal, and 6 percent from nuclear energy.

The strategy of the UAE is built on a foundation of four pillars. The first is efficient assistance to other countries. This is a direct consequence of the guiding principles that served as the basis for the formation of the state. On the other hand, from the perspective of UAE foreign policy, it is meant to improve the image. This nation is very involved in the fight for

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[45] A comprehensive plan launched by the UAE aims for a more sustainable and efficient energy future by diversifying sources and increasing the use of renewable energy.

peace, tolerance, and stability on the world stage (Fick, & Cornwell, 2018). The program also includes another component known as technical collaboration. This helps to contribute to an improvement in the efficiency with which the impact of foreign assistance is achieved. In addition, through facilitating the exchange of information and experience among recipients. The UAE is able to mold its programs and activities in a more expansive manner than before.

3.3.6 Participation in International Organizations

The participation in international organizations as a component of multilateral diplomacy is the third and final pillar of the approach. The UAE has, throughout the course of the last several years, worked to strengthen ties not just within the GCC but also with the European Union (GCC, 2019). The International Renewable Energy Agency has decided to locate its headquarters in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE. This decision was the outcome of formal diplomatic actions. In conclusion, the UAE will play host to a large number of significant international events, which will make up the fourth and last pillar of the foreign assistance plan providing information about key projects for the world organizations, such as help to other countries. The World Exhibitions Expo 2020, which will take place in Dubai from October 2021 through March 2022, is now considered to be one of the most significant activities to be carried. As a result, this worldwide mega-event serves as a significant instrument of soft power. This may be described as the capacity to influence other people via relationships while also having the power to encourage others to act in a way that is consistent with the objectives of the UAE.

In addition to its four pillars, the UAE Foreign Assistance Policy for 2017–2021 has established aims. The UAE Policy for 2017–2021 was crafted to enhance its global presence and influence through strategic international aid and development initiatives. Central to this policy is the UAE commitment to supporting global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This commitment is reflected in targeted assistance programs

focusing on critical areas such as poverty reduction, healthcare, education, and sustainable development. The policy prioritizes humanitarian aid, ensuring rapid and effective response to crises worldwide, and emphasizes sustainable development projects that provide long-term benefits to recipient countries. These projects are aimed at immediate relief and fostering sustainable growth and stability in these regions. By aligning its foreign assistance strategy with the SDGs, the UAE reinforces its position as a responsible global actor and enhances its soft power.

The UAE Foreign Assistance Policy is designed to strengthen global diplomatic ties. Through various projects, this policy encourages international collaboration in renewable energy, infrastructure, and other critical sectors. These collaborations strengthen diplomatic ties and promote international cooperation, positioning the UAE as a global development partner. Public diplomacy relies on cultural understanding and exchange, which the policy emphasizes. Through these initiatives, the UAE contributes to global development and improves its image as a forward-thinking, compassionate, and proactive nation. This comprehensive approach to foreign assistance and international relations boosts the UAE soft power, allowing it to shape global perceptions and agendas in line with its national interests and values.

The UAE foreign aid aims to improve the quality of life and fight global unemployment. Promoting peace, prosperity, and stability worldwide is another important goal. The UAE actively seeks to expand its partnerships with various nations, focusing on trade and investment agreements that help emerging economies prosper. The UAE has helped form many international coalitions.

Women empowerment, good governance, and environmental sustainability are the UAE priorities for foreign assistance. These areas give the UAE many chances to showcase its achievements and boost its global reputation. These efforts also support the UAE commitment

to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), solidifying its position as a global leader in addressing pressing international issues. UAE foreign assistance projects are global, but many focus on the Middle East and Arab world. The UAE Foreign Aid Program for 2017–2021 shows how the country has creatively adapted its foreign policy in recent years to make its aid efforts effective and aligned with its diplomatic and strategic goals. This novel approach shows the UAE commitment to solving global issues and boosting its international standing.

The UAE has strategically centered much of its foreign assistance efforts on the Middle East and the broader Arab world, reflecting a deep commitment to regional stability and development. This focus is part of a comprehensive strategy that intertwines humanitarian aid with diplomatic engagement to address the various challenges countries face in these regions. By prioritizing the Middle East and Arab nations, the UAE foreign assistance projects often target vital areas such as infrastructure development, healthcare, education, and emergency relief. This regional focus is not only a response to geographical proximity and shared cultural ties but also a strategic aspect of the UAE public diplomacy, aiming to foster regional solidarity, peace, and stability. The UAE efforts include substantial contributions to reconstruction projects in war-torn countries, support for refugees, and aid in natural disasters. These initiatives alleviate immediate suffering and contribute to long-term recovery and development, enhancing the UAE influence and reputation as a leader in humanitarian efforts within the region.

Furthermore, the UAE targeted assistance in the Middle East and Arab world significantly contributes to its soft power strategy. By providing aid and support, the UAE positions itself as a critical player in the regional geopolitical landscape, capable of positively influencing outcomes and building strong alliances. This approach is aligned with the broader objectives of its foreign policy, which seeks to promote stability, prosperity, and peace in the region. The UAE engagement in these areas demonstrates a blend of strategic interests and a

genuine commitment to the well-being of neighboring nations, which enhances its image as a responsible and benevolent regional power. Additionally, these efforts in public diplomacy extend beyond traditional state-to-state relations, involving non-state actors and civil society, further broadening the impact and reach of the UAE initiatives. Through its focused assistance in the Middle East and Arab world, the UAE effectively leverages its resources and capabilities to extend its influence and foster a positive perception among its regional neighbors, reinforcing its role as a critical diplomatic and humanitarian actor in the region.

3.3.7 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established by the UN, represent a comprehensive framework for global development, aiming to address a range of social, economic, and environmental challenges by 2030. Allen, Metternicht, and Wiedmann (2018) emphasize the importance of these goals as a transformative agenda for global progress. Their analysis of the initial stages of SDG implementation across various countries reveals that, while there has been progress, significant challenges persist. These include integrating the goals into national policies, mobilizing resources, and ensuring inclusive participation in the SDG process. Their findings highlight the need for concerted efforts at both national and international levels to achieve the ambitious targets set by the SDGs.

The role of indicators in measuring progress towards the SDGs is crucial. Hák, Janoušková, and Moldan (2016) underline the importance of developing relevant and effective indicators that accurately reflect the progress of each goal. The complexity and interlinked nature of the SDGs requires a set of indicators that not only provide a clear picture of individual goal achievement but also capture the interconnected impacts across multiple goals. This approach necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the various dimensions of sustainable development and adopting a holistic perspective in evaluating progress.

In the context of research and academic contribution, Leal Filho et al. (2018) discuss the critical role of academic institutions in advancing the SDG agenda. They argue that research and education are fundamental to understanding and addressing the challenges inherent in the SDGs. Academic institutions can contribute by generating knowledge, fostering innovation, and educating future leaders and policymakers. This can support evidence-based policymaking and the development of effective strategies to achieve the SDGs. The involvement of academia is thus essential in reinvigorating the sustainable development research agenda and ensuring informed and effective implementation of the SDGs.

Fleming et al. (2017) provides a practical perspective on implementing the SDGs through a case study in marine policy. Their work illustrates the application of the SDGs in a specific sector, highlighting the importance of tailored strategies that consider the unique challenges and opportunities of different sectors. This sector-specific approach is crucial for operationalizing the SDGs effectively, ensuring that strategies are contextually relevant and capable of addressing sectoral needs while contributing to the broader goals of sustainable development.

In the specific context of the UAE, the implementation of the SDGs has been integrated into the nation's broader public diplomacy and soft power strategy. The UAE commitment to the SDGs is reflected in its policies and initiatives to promote sustainable development, both domestically and internationally. The UAE efforts in renewable energy, sustainable urban development, and international humanitarian assistance align with various SDGs and enhance the country's global standing and influence. The UAE approach to the SDGs demonstrates how public diplomacy and a commitment to sustainable development can be effectively leveraged to enhance a nation's soft power, positioning it as a responsible and progressive actor in the global community.

3.3.8 *Soft Power in UAE as a capacity to influence*

Soft power is the ability to influence others' actions and decisions to achieve one's goals, often through subtle and indirect means, while benefiting the actor driving the influence. Financial resources and charitable donations can go beyond soft power. They may constitute hard power when combined with influence. This study concentrates on traditional soft power aspects like humanitarian aid, international aid, and economic development (Gökalp, 2020). It shows that soft power's economic aspect is attractive, not coercive. The brand or image a nation projects to the world affects soft power's effectiveness. The UAE created its soft power strategy to improve its global reputation. Thus, the UAE has improved its international standing. Research shows that smaller Gulf nations like the UAE use diplomatic positioning and adaptive strategies to increase their global influence through soft power. These small states, especially the UAE, can assert regional dominance with innovative soft power tools. The UAE developed many soft power instruments in the 21st century to strengthen its foreign policy and gain international recognition. UAE foreign aid has improved its global image and diplomatic relations with recipient nations. This strategy has helped the UAE achieve its international goals.

In September of that year, the UAE launched its Soft Power Strategy to improve its international standing. This strategy promotes regional cooperation to provide humanitarian aid. Economic engagement, aid consolidation, and emergency and disaster relief are among the six diplomatic pillars of the strategy. These initiatives should boost the UAE soft power prominence. The research emphasizes that the UAE soft power strategy has clear goals and a comprehensive framework for increasing its global influence and diplomatic reach. This strategy shows the UAE commitment to using soft power to improve its international standing by promoting cooperation and humanity. The UAE is growing its soft power through diplomacy, aid, and economic partnerships, which could shape its international policy.

The UAE diplomacy as a cultural diplomacy was an achievement, as evidenced by the awarding of Abu Dhabi as the head office located for the United Nations Environment Programmed, a new international organization. The UAE strategic approach to diplomacy extends beyond traditional realms, integrating cultural diplomacy as a critical component of its foreign policy. This integration was notably recognized when Abu Dhabi was selected as the headquarters for the United Nations Environment Program's (UNEP) new international organization. This achievement is a testament to the UAE commitment to environmental issues and reflects its adept use of cultural diplomacy. By hosting an essential arm of the UNEP, the UAE bridges environmental stewardship with its rich cultural heritage, showcasing its unique ability to blend traditional values with modern sustainability initiatives. This blend is a powerful tool in the UAE diplomatic arsenal, enhancing its global image and influence. In this context, the UAE cultural diplomacy goes beyond arts and heritage; it promotes a sustainable lifestyle and environmental responsibility, reflecting the nation's broader goals of fostering a sustainable future and positioning itself as a leader in global environmental governance. This organization is responsible for leading world leaders in their search for global effective innovations for renewable energy sources (EE online, 2019). It has also developed into a mechanism for the delivery of international assistance to LDC[46] governments. The UAE strategic approach to diplomacy extends beyond traditional realms, integrating cultural diplomacy as a critical component of its foreign policy. This integration was notably recognized when Abu Dhabi was selected as the headquarters for the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) new international organization. This achievement is a testament to the UAE commitment to environmental issues and reflects its adept use of cultural diplomacy. By hosting an essential arm of the UNEP, the UAE bridges environmental stewardship with its rich cultural heritage, showcasing its unique ability to blend traditional

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[46] LDC (Least Developed Countries): A United Nations classification for countries with the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, often receiving targeted international aid and support.

values with modern sustainability initiatives. This blend is a powerful tool in the UAE diplomatic arsenal, enhancing its global image and influence. In this context, the UAE cultural diplomacy goes beyond arts and heritage; it promotes a sustainable lifestyle and environmental responsibility, reflecting the nation's broader goals of fostering a sustainable future and positioning itself as a leader in global environmental governance.

When analyzing the UAE use of soft power and the ramifications of such usage, it is important to highlight the usefulness of its instruments. It has helped strengthen the country's brand as well as increase the role that this state plays in the international arena. However, the overseas assistance provided by the UAE did not always successfully reach all of those who were in need. The primary cause for this was on the part of those who were receiving the assistance. In spite of this, it was successful in terms of the importance it had for the efficacy of soft power. It has made the prospect of exerting influence on the environment on a global scale far more accessible.

The inflated view that Arabs have of American strength leads to the allegation that the administration of the United States does not make effective use of the power it has for some unknown reason (Samuel-Azran, 2013). One example of this that has been around for a long time is the United States government's position on the Arab-Israeli conflict (Abozeid, 2021). It is a generally held belief that the United States government could simply compel Israel to evacuate from disputed Arab areas if it so desired. Moreover, it has the potential to withhold monetary assistance on which Israel relies. This viewpoint does not take into consideration the fundamental characteristics of the political system in the United States. Other examples can be identified during the period of the American government when it was felt by Arabs that he had failed to act. When he should have utilized the strength of the United States to intervene to deal with issues in the Middle East. For instance, in 2011, President Obama demanded that Bashar al-Assad, the president of Syria, stand down from his position. Nevertheless, while the latter

remained in government after that. Many Arabs believed that Obama was concealing some other motivation for wanting Bashaar to remain in government. Many people wanted Obama to use force to remove Bashaar, but they failed to grasp that he strongly favors negotiations and other forms of peaceful measures of conflict resolution (Al Zaabi and Awamleh, 2019).

According to Almatrooshi (2019), the purpose of the UAE foreign assistance strategy is to contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (Dubai International Academic City, 2019). As a result, the UAE hopes to contribute toward eradicating poverty in all of its manifestations and around the globe via the provision of help to other countries. Guarantee that education is both inclusive and of high quality and encourage further education throughout life to achieve gender equality and provide all women and girls the ability to make their own decisions; encourage inclusive and sustainable economic development, job creation, and good work for everyone. Create robust infrastructure, encourage environmentally responsible industry, and encourage innovative thinking and minimize inequalities both within and across nations, foster inclusive and peaceful communities, and construct institutions at all levels that are both effective and accountable as well as welcoming to everyone as well as reinvigorate the global cooperation for environmentally responsible growth.

The UAE actively supports global Sustainable Development Goals initiatives. It collaborates with UNRWA to implement the UN Agenda 2030 through international assistance. Additionally, the UAE funds the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The UAE gradual strengthening of its relationship with the EU over several years exemplifies its foreign assistance and SDG achievement. Scandinavian EU nations have led global soft power and SDG implementation rankings, setting a benchmark for many.

The UAE has actively supported the Sustainable Development Goals since their inception. Ambassadors helped shape the 2030 Agenda. The Secretary-General appointed the

UAE Foreign Minister to the High-Level Commission on Global Environmental Sustainability. The UAE also helped develop the SDGs through the UN Office for Coordination. This nation fully implements its strategies in relevant agencies' daily operations. Foreign assistance—a cornerstone of sound foreign policy—is essential to achieving ten of the seventeen SDGs.

The UAE created the National Commission for Sustainable Development Goals in 2017 to streamline SDG coordination. This body includes government department representatives. UAE Minister for International Cooperation Reem Al Hashimy was proposed as commission chair. The UAE also established the Private Market Roundtable for Economic Development to improve public-private cooperation. Millennials are also on the UAE Sustainability Development Steering Committee (Krzymowski, 2020). In January 2018, the European External Action Service and the UAE Ministry of International Trade and Industry signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen their partnership.

This initiative promotes strategic collaboration, especially in SDG-aligned sectors. The Global Committee for Sustainable Development Goals held its first meeting in Dubai, UAE, during the World Government Summit in February 2018. This initiative aims to create a network of government, international, non-governmental, scientific, and corporate organizations. Collaboration is intended to be multidimensional and multilevel. UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation was named organization chair. At the same meeting, the UAE launched the Humanitarian Logistics Data Bank. This platform streamlines humanitarian aid coordination and global emergency information sharing. The system provides timely and accurate logistics route information on ports and airports to help the Security Council meet global needs for food and medicine.

The UAE leads MENA in progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation reports that over half of its foreign assistance funds promote peace and justice in the region. These efforts support the 17

SDGs for poverty reduction and economic development. Reem Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation, said the country's foreign assistance policy is crucial to the UN 2030 Agenda.

The UAE will be evaluated based on their capacity to make coalitions with international bodies who are engaged in the provision of humanitarian reliefs. In order for soft power to be successful, the capacity to forge alliances is an additional factor that must be taken into consideration (Haigh, 2020). The UAE diplomatic mission has been quite active on the world stage, participating in a wide range of different activities. It has also created a deeper partnership with the European Union for the purpose of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and providing assistance to other countries. The major international organization has shown the greatest dedication to these issues anywhere in the globe. In addition, from the very inception, some of its members have been pioneers in the process of putting the premises of UN Agenda 2030 into practice. As a direct consequence of this, the speaker of the UAE Federal National Council (FNC) met in Brussels in April 2016 with the General Assembly of the Organization for International Affairs and Information Protection, who at the same time served as the Vice President of the European Commissioner. During the course of the meeting, she brought attention to the role, significance, and accomplishments of the UAE in the establishment of eight Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, the speaker of FNC admired the dedication to tolerance as well as the struggle against extremism as well as the function that women play in social life. The problems of peace in the Middle East as well as the situations in Yemen, Syria, and Iran were the primary topics of discussion (History, 2018). In addition, both parties have begun holding monthly expert conferences with the goal of developing an affiliate marketer plan between the EU and the UAE to achieve the SDGs. In January of 2017, the Vice President of the European Commission, who is in charge of workforce, population increase, financing, and economic strength, traveled to the UAE in a

process of strengthening collaborative efforts with the UAE, particularly regarding the 2030 Agenda For sustainable development.

3.4   Role of Cultural Diplomacy in UAE Soft Power

The UAE has significantly contributed to the development of the cultural tourist industry with the opening of the Louvre Abu Dhabi as it can be seen in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Inaugurations of Louvre Abu Dhabi

Approximately 600 irreplaceable pieces of art from all over the globe have been used to adorn the monument's walls. Three hundred of the total artworks on display were on contract from thirteen of the most prestigious art institutions in France. The paintings were created by prominent artists such as Vincent van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, and Cy Twombly, among others. The depiction of significant ages in human growth was the primary subject of the artwork for the cover. In addition to this, it attracted attention to the connections that exist across different civilizations and cultural groups. Manufacturers have been tremendously encouraged to establish businesses in the UAE economy by several initiatives aimed at bolstering the tourist sector. The plan assists the government of the UAE in achieving and accomplishing its objectives of political establishment, a robust economy, notable cultural endeavors, and

advanced infrastructure in the globe. It has been successful in convincing prospective investors to form a business in the emerging industries of the UAE (Al Suwaidi, 2021).

Countries now have options to project influence worldwide other than via the use of military strength, which is one of the positive developments brought about by the modern era. Joseph Nye, a former assistant secretary of defense of the United States, came up with the phrase "soft power" to describe this process (Alzaabi, 2019). The skill of persuading other people to do what one wants is in a non-threatening manner. It is possible that the fact that an American coined the word is not shocking at all. In addition to the tremendous command and control it has, the United States has also been a pioneer in the field of international influence throughout the course of the last century, to great success. There are moments when the two even come together. According to an article published in The National, the United States allegedly hatched a plot in the 1950s to sway Filipino voters in favor of electing Ramon Magsaysay as their seventh president by penning a popular song called "Magsaysay Mambo." The Global Soft Power Index is a yearly study that analyses more daily developments. The United States of America has moved up to first position on the list for this year, having previously been ranked sixth. In recent years, the UAE has made considerable progress toward attaining the number one position (Salama, 2015). The nation is ranked 15th worldwide in the 2022 report, which is an improvement of two points from the previous year restoring its position as the most important nation in the Middle East. This makes perfect sense when one considers that the nation has been working toward diversification and becoming a worldwide destination for many years, and that its objectives are consistently met year after year (Snow and Cull, 2020).

UAE public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy plays a pivotal role in enhancing its soft power strategy. The UAE has skillfully utilized its rich cultural heritage and modern cosmopolitan ethos as crucial instruments in its diplomatic repertoire. By promoting its unique

blend of traditional Arab culture and innovative modern development, the UAE has positioned itself as a bridge between the East and West. This is evident in various cultural initiatives, such as establishing world-class museums, hosting international arts festivals, and preserving its rich historical legacy. These endeavors display the UAE commitment to cultural preservation and appreciation and serve as platforms for international cultural exchange. The success of such cultural diplomacy efforts is reflected in the UAE growing influence and positive image on the global stage, fostering international goodwill and enhancing its standing in the realm of soft power.

Furthermore, the UAE approach to cultural diplomacy extends to integrating sustainable practices and environmental stewardship into its cultural narrative. The selection of Abu Dhabi as the headquarters for the United Nations Environment Program's (UNEP) new international organization underlines the UAE commitment to environmental issues and its ability to merge cultural values with sustainability goals. Through such initiatives, the UAE demonstrates that cultural diplomacy is not limited to arts and heritage; it encompasses a broader vision of promoting sustainable development and environmental consciousness. By aligning its cultural diplomacy with global concerns such as climate change and renewable energy, the UAE effectively uses its cultural influence to advocate for crucial global issues, further solidifying its role as a cultural and environmental diplomacy leader. This strategic use of cultural diplomacy reinforces the UAE soft power, enabling it to shape a positive international narrative and exert influence beyond its borders.

At a monthly UAE government conference, the Soft Power Strategy was revealed. A national action plan is part of this initiative to boost the UAE global and regional image and solidify its economic, cultural, and humanitarian leadership. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs H.H. Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan announced it (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2021). Sheikh Mansour stressed that the UAE has the economic,

cultural, and civilizational resources to strengthen its global standing. He added that the UAE wants to establish itself globally and in its citizens' hearts. He said the government wants to "build on our strategic standing with both the Eastern and Western worlds by fostering cultural (Gökalp, 2020), political, and economic engagement for the benefit of all." He added that the nation's strength is its values of humanity, dedication, and transparency, which aim to foster meaningful relationships with people worldwide. Sheikh Mansour also noted that the UAE achievements have led to its prosperity and global recognition. He concluded, "The UAE identity is a shared responsibility of all its citizens, across every field" (Gray, 2011). Saeed Mohammad Al Eter, a member of the Soft Power Council, the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and the Future Public Diplomacy Office Director-General, reiterated this message. The UAE soft power strategy supports this vision, strengthening its global standing.

The UAE strategic plan vision is expected to boost its domestic and international standing. The UAE Soft Power Strategy aims to enhance its cultural, economic, and humanitarian achievements. Diplomatic engagement in this strategy considers cultural factors like national identity, heritage, social cohesion, political climate, cultural accessibility, and acceptance. This strategy makes the UAE a hub for international activity and a gateway to the Arab world. It fosters unparalleled economic growth in the region by bringing diverse cultures and ideas together in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. The strategy has four main goals. First, the UAE should be established as a regional gateway. The remaining three goals are to unify the economy, anthropology, tourism, and communications and to advance science. The plan also aims to make the UAE a strategic cultural, artistic, and tourism hub and boost its image as a progressive, tolerant nation that welcomes all. The UAE hopes to increase its global influence and soft power by achieving these goals.

The strategy is based on seven critical dimensions of UAE political communication (Chong & Druckman, 2007). These axes include altruistic multilateralism, professional and

technical negotiations, people-to-people interactions, modern cultural engagement, economic diplomacy, and national identity promotion. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai, established the UAE Soft Power Council in May to formalize these efforts. The council uses soft power to develop the UAE domestic and international political strategies through cultural initiatives, emerging technologies, philanthropy, science, and business. The Minister of Cabinet Affairs and the Future, Mohammed Abdullah Al Gergawi, led the UAE Soft Power Council. The council aims to boost the UAE global influence through broad-based soft power. The council will encourage UAE public-private sector collaboration through soft power initiatives and programs. It will also regularly update the UAE Cabinet on the progress and implementation of these strategies to ensure that the nation continues to improve its international standing and demonstrate its unique qualities, such as open-mindedness and forward-thinking global engagement.

The UAE positions itself as a regional leader and a global ambassador of tolerance, innovation, and progress by promoting cooperation across sectors and cultural and technological advancements. This carefully planned strategy helps the UAE strengthen its soft power and influence international agendas and perceptions.

3.5   Strategies used by the UAE government

However, in recent times, the UAE has gained a lot of respect and admiration for the way it handled the Covid-19 epidemic, a sudden global earthquake. It has become possibly the most significant factor in determining this year's rankings, and this includes both efforts to overcome it and to recover from it. The UAE has now, and to a large extent, begun opening up to the rest of the world after two years of restrictions, reclaiming its position as a major hub for trade and transportation. People have been clamoring for the revival of both of these sectors (Saberi et al., 2018b). Some countries that have implemented stricter regulations have paid a price for their actions, including Australia and New Zealand, both of which have seen their

rankings decline as a result. Countries like China, the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom that were early adopters of vaccinations saw significant benefits for themselves as well as for the rest of the world (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: Soft Power Ranking

The decision to join the Covax program, its unprecedentedly fast vaccination rollout, and its ability to quickly implement protective measures have raised its global standing. The UAE was also one of the first countries to host significant international business and sports events after the pandemic, demonstrating its resilience and adaptability. These achievements demonstrate the nation's ability to succeed and lead globally, solidifying its reputation as a dynamic and reliable player in various sectors. At the Covid-19 conference, the UAE long-term goals to strengthen its global brand became clearer. VP and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid tweeted that the UAE "true soft power" is its development model, which seamlessly bridges East and West. This unique positioning benefits the UAE soft power strategy and global influence. The nation's success in rankings, particularly in commerce and trade, reinforces its appeal as a global hub for employment and economic opportunity for professionals worldwide.

Soft power thrives in stable environments, as the UAE has shown through its resilience and progress. The world has changed dramatically recently, and 2024 will bring new challenges and opportunities. The UAE growth and influence continue despite these changes. The country remains the top-ranked Middle Eastern nation, steadily rising toward the top 10 global players. This progress shows the UAE commitment to development, innovation, and global cooperation, making it a model of resilience and success in a changing world.

However, the findings of the research as a whole reveal that receiving help from other countries was a crucial component in the UAE ability to adjust to changes in the nature of international relations (Al Suwaidi, 2021). On the other hand, because of its internal dynamics, it has become one of the major givers of international assistance in the world. A comprehensive examination of the nation reveals that this is, to a significant extent, "targeted." The degree to which an individual or group is in desperate need determines the size of the quantity of assistance that will be provided to them. This is evidence that indicates how help to other countries may be used as a tool of advantage in the context of international relations. The primary strength that the proposed article makes to studies on the creation of international relations is the enrichment of this research field through the provision of a latest discoveries' analysis. This analysis demonstrates how the UAE has adapted to the wide variety of problems that has arisen in the external environment. The UAE has surpassed all other countries as the largest giver of help abroad.

The supply of foreign assistance, as outlined in target 16, was maintained in 2018. The second aim, *"Zero Hunger,"* was given top priority for the very first time. As a component of it, the UAE provided financial support to enhance the conditions necessary to guarantee that people have access to food in countries such as Yemen, Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, and Somalia. The building of a dam in Jordan is one example to illustrate this point. The construction of this dam is intended to increase the amount of water available in this nation, which is anticipated

to aid in the expansion of agricultural production (Gibbson, 2018). Another illustration of this may be seen in the building of a canal in Egypt known as the Sheikh Zayed Canal, which was carried out by the Abu Dhabi Foundation Development. It is hoped that this would make it possible to create a new delta in the southern part of the country, which will also expand the opportunities for agriculture.

The UAE Foreign Aid contributes toward the realization of the SDGs. Between 2016 and 2021, this nation will contribute 56.41 billion USD to various international aid organizations. Specific SDGs were the focus of attention for the UAE. The UAE strategic partnership with the United Nations International Food Policy Research Institute, aimed at fulfilling Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 "No Poverty" and "Zero Hunger," respectively is a significant demonstration of its commitment to addressing global challenges through public diplomacy and soft power. This collaboration, particularly within the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Hand-in-Hand Program, established in October 2019, exemplifies the UAE proactive approach to tackling critical issues like poverty and hunger. By aligning itself with these international objectives, the UAE contributes to vital global humanitarian efforts and enhances its international stature as a responsible and proactive member of the global community. This alignment with such universally recognized goals reinforces the UAE position as a leader in international development. It highlights its commitment to leveraging its resources and influence to impact the world stage positively, further solidifying its role in global diplomacy and soft power. The UAE has entered into a strategic relationship with the United Nations International food Policy Research institute in order to accomplish goals 1 and 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals which are respectively "No Poverty"* and "Zero Hunger[47] (FAO). In October 2019, FAO established the Hand-in-

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[47] No Poverty: The United Arab Emirates' strategic partnership with international organizations emphasizes its commitment to eradicating poverty globally, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 1.
Zero Hunger: Through initiatives like the FAO's Hand-in-Hand Program, the UAE demonstrates its dedication to combating global hunger, directly supporting Sustainable Development Goal 2.

Hand Program, which has become one of the objectives for the UAE. The efficient modernization of farming and the long-term improvement of rural communities all over the globe are the two primary focuses of this initiative. For instance, when working towards the achievement of aim 4: Quality Education. The UAE has committed to the International Council for Educational (GPE) program and will provide around 100 million USD to be distributed among 90 different nations between the years 2018 and 2020. In addition, the UAE said that it would give the same amount in 2021–2025. As a form of international assistance, the UAE launched a program in 2018 called "100 Percent Women Policy" with the intention of achieving both objective No. 5 (Gender Equality) and target No. 10 (Reduced Inequalities). By the year 2020, the UAE has already contributed 1.68 billion USD toward this endeavor. In addition, in an effort to achieve Goal 7 (Available renewable Resources), the UAE established unique funds to assist less developed areas of the world in the power generation sector. Towards this end, the UAE disbursed roughly 538 million US Dollars in the form of international assistance between the years 2010 and 2020.

The dramatic growth in expenditures for Africa is mostly due to the backing of Egypt, which went through upheavals in 2013. This is shown by a comprehensive study of the nations that would benefit from these expenditures. During that time, the nation got as much as 79 percent of the total amount of foreign assistance that was made available, which was equal to 4.63 billion USD. In spite of the falling numbers the next year. Egypt continued to receive the most assistance from the UAE; the country was given a total of USD 3.196 billion, which represents more than half of the UAE overall budget for foreign aid (Salisbury, 2018).

However, in 2015, there was still another dramatic growth to the level of 72 percent of all foreign assistance that flowed just to Egypt, which totaled 6.339 billion USD. This figure represents a significant increase from the previous year. A significant shift occurred in the year

2016. During that time, Yemen was the recipient of 57% of the total foreign assistance provided by the UAE, which totaled USD 3.452 billion. This is a direct consequence of the civil war that broke out in this nation in the year 2015. After that point, Yemen turned became a top concern. The UAE contributed USD 2.804 billion in assistance to the nation in 2017, which represents 55 percent of the total aid received by the country. In 2018, Yemen got 75% of the total amount, which was equivalent to USD 5.844 billion and was the biggest figure ever. In 2019, this nation was given USD 5.124 billion, which represents 64.5 percent of the UAE total humanitarian assistance spending. The dedication of the UAE to Egypt serves as an excellent illustration of role and adaptation theory. The UAE demonstrated a creative adaptation in response to the changes that are taking place in Egypt by making use of assistance from other countries. In this situation, one has no choice but to agree with the theoretical premise, which states that this kind of creativity gives instruments that may be used to influence other participants in international relations.

The UAE foreign assistance strategy underwent significant shifts between 2015 and 2019, reflecting its adaptive approach to international relations and foreign policy. In 2015, a dramatic increase was observed in the UAE foreign aid, with Egypt receiving a substantial portion, amounting to 6.339 billion USD, which constituted 72 percent of the UAE total foreign assistance. This surge in aid to Egypt represented the UAE strategic response to Egypt's changing political and economic landscape, aligning with its broader foreign policy objectives.

However, the scenario evolved notably in 2016, when Yemen became the primary focus of the UAE foreign assistance, receiving 57% of its total aid, amounting to 3.452 billion USD. This shift was a direct response to the outbreak of the civil war in Yemen in 2015. The UAE increasing aid to Yemen over the subsequent years, peaking at 5.844 billion USD in 2018 (75% of the total aid), underscores its commitment to addressing the humanitarian crisis in the region.

The consistent support to Yemen, including the 5.124 billion USD contributed in 2019, highlights the UAE role in adaptation in its foreign policy to address emergent challenges.

This pattern of foreign aid distribution by the UAE reflects a model of creative adaptation in foreign policy, as described by Conway and Feigert and analyzed by Snyder (2019). This model implies that a nation's foreign assistance is a strategic tool shaped by national interests and the desire to influence the dynamics of international relations. The UAE shifting focus from Egypt to Yemen exemplifies this approach, demonstrating how foreign aid can be utilized to adapt to changing geopolitical landscapes and assert influence. The UAE foreign policy, particularly in international aid, is characterized by a dynamic and responsive approach, aligning its assistance with evolving regional needs and priorities.

The model of creative adaptation is one that is based on action that is intended to shape the shifting international situation in accordance with national interest. According to Conway and Feigert, this process reveals its function and place in relation to the other participants (Snyder, 2019). As a result, an interaction process takes occur, which ultimately results in interaction and influence. In turn, it determines where they stand and who plays what role in their relationships. This is particularly true in the context of the connection between the donor and the recipient. Therefore, the provision of assistance from other nations is of utmost significance in the context of the UAE foreign policy. As a result, the role theory made it feasible to carry out an accurate analysis of the UAE foreign policy and the instruments it employs, which includes foreign assistance (Tago, 2017). The fluctuations of the international investment delivered between 2013 and 2019 as well as the enterprises and the political backdrop will be the primary focus of comparability. The research findings were created by conducting an in-depth critical examination of the study material using the theories and methodologies that were selected for application. In addition, the author's experience and first-hand perceptions of the region that was being researched were used in the investigation of the

study material. Therefore, the conceptual and methodological apparatus that was chosen was validated by looking at it from the perspective of practice.

The relationship between the donor and the recipient countries (Egypt and Yemen) goes beyond mere financial transactions; it represents a complex interplay of diplomacy, strategic interests, and regional stability. As Tago (2017) points out, such foreign policy actions are instrumental in defining the UAE's role and influence in international relations. Analyzing the UAE's foreign aid, especially in the context of the changes observed from 2013 to 2019, is crucial for understanding its foreign policy and diplomacy approach. This analysis, incorporating theoretical frameworks and practical observations, validates the chosen conceptual and methodological tools, illustrating the UAE strategic use of foreign aid as a critical component of its soft power and international diplomacy.

3.6   Functional boundaries and influencing factors of public diplomacy on Soft Power and International Relations

Foreign policy relies on bilateral relationships, consular support, dialogue, and negotiations to ensure that other nations understand and accept a country's views (Todhunter, 2013). Policies set the direction and goals of diplomatic interactions, but diplomacy involves implementing and communicating these initiatives (Murray et al., 2011). The minister of foreign affairs hosts foreign leaders and attends state events abroad (Baxter & Stewart, 2008).

Due to changing international engagement methods, ministries of foreign affairs have changed their foreign affairs management (Hanson, 2010). Foreign ministries increasingly use technology to improve operations (Ehiane et al., 2013; Hockings & Mellisen, 2015). Information and communication technology (ICT) has become essential to society, as well as transparent and auditable public service delivery, according to Heeks and Bailur (2007). Foreign ministries have also adopted ICT frameworks to streamline operations (Batora, 2008; Hanson, 2010), updating technical infrastructure to improve computer network efficiency

(Ehiane et al., 2013). In recent years, e-diplomacy has challenged traditional diplomatic methods and offered new ways to support diplomats' diverse roles. ICT in foreign ministries has been chiefly used for internal operations until recently.

The integration of diplomacy and technology, mainly through e-diplomacy, has become a cornerstone of its foreign policy implementation and public diplomacy strategy. The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC) has harnessed Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance its diplomatic activities, streamline operations, and effectively communicate its policies and perspectives to a global audience. This modernization of diplomatic practices aligns with the broader vision of the UAE to be a leader in technological innovation and efficiency. As noted by Heeks and Bailur (2007), the use of ICT in diplomacy enhances transparency and accountability in public services, a principle that the UAE has embraced in its diplomatic endeavors. Moreover, the adaptation of e-diplomacy by the UAE MOFAIC is evident in its external engagements. Utilizing digital platforms, the UAE has been able to reach wider audiences, engage in real-time communication, and respond promptly to global developments.

Furthermore, the UAE approach to public diplomacy through digital means extends beyond mere technological adoption. It reflects a strategic understanding of the evolving landscape of international relations, where digital interactions play an increasingly significant role. The UAE use of social media, digital communication channels, and online forums for diplomatic engagement illustrates its commitment to leveraging technology to advance its foreign policy goals. This approach enhances the UAE soft power, projecting an image of a modern, connected, innovative nation. Additionally, e-diplomacy has enabled the UAE to engage in more effective cultural diplomacy, promoting its culture and values through digital storytelling and online cultural exchanges. Digitalizing diplomatic practices in the UAE is not just an operational upgrade but a strategic choice that aligns with its goal of being an influential

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player in global diplomacy. By integrating technology into its diplomatic framework, the UAE bolsters its international standing and reinforces its role as a progressive and dynamic actor in international relations.

3.6.1 Effectiveness of Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy can shape soft power through various circumstances and methods. The UAE can be a global model by highlighting its leadership, governance, economic growth, security, and stability. It can also demonstrate its political-aligned soft power tools. The UAE's cultural appeals include tolerance, education, international events, cultural hub status, and multiculturalism (Uberoi, 2018). The UAE's support of major international organizations, multilateral projects, global philanthropy, humanitarian aid, and conflict resolution initiatives make it attractive in foreign policy.

Despite having these soft power tools, the UAE must overcome several obstacles to maximize its effectiveness. Unlike hard power, which is centralized in the government, soft power is distributed across the public and private sectors, which presents a challenge. Decentralization can cause agenda conflicts. Thanks to communication technology, anyone can represent their country and engage with global audiences. The issue arises when non-state actors project messages and images that conflict with government goals. Thus, harnessing private entities and individuals' creativity while maintaining a national message is problematic. Additionally, soft power is expensive. Due to the volatile global economy and political landscape, the UAE's soft power assets, like international philanthropy, tourism, aviation, and infrastructure investments, are hard to sustain (Vasilevskyt, 2013). The changing dynamics of global economics and politics make maintaining soft power assets like foreign philanthropy and tourism and infrastructure investments difficult. Firstly, foreign philanthropy requires a continuous financial commitment, which economic fluctuations and shifting national priorities can strain. Secondly, investments in the travel and aviation sectors are subject to global market

volatility and changing travel patterns, making consistent growth challenging. Thirdly, large-scale infrastructure projects demand substantial financial resources and long-term planning amidst rapidly evolving technological landscapes. Additionally, geopolitical shifts can impact bilateral and multilateral relationships, influencing the effectiveness of soft power strategies. Finally, the environmental sustainability of these investments, especially in energy-intensive sectors like aviation, is increasingly scrutinized, necessitating adaptive and future-oriented strategies. A successful soft power campaign abroad requires domestic backing. Nations cannot therefore assume that extravagant projects undertaken to dazzle guests would be welcomed or respected at home. Fourth, the UAE lacks a worldwide media presence, which makes it more vulnerable to false global narratives even though it helps a country portray its image. Fifth, the UAE increased use of force in countries like Yemen could damage its reputation.

The effectiveness of public diplomacy, particularly in the context of the UAE, is a multifaceted concept that hinges on the ability to influence international perception and build strong global relationships. One prominent case study that showcases the UAE adeptness in public diplomacy is its handling of Expo 2020 Dubai. This global event served as a platform for international collaboration and innovation and significantly enhanced the UAE image on the world stage. By hosting diverse cultures and ideas, the UAE demonstrated its capacity to be a global convenor and a hub for international dialogue. This event, integrating various aspects of culture, technology, and innovation, exemplified the UAE soft power, attracting millions of visitors and fostering a positive international reputation.

Another critical aspect of the UAE public diplomacy strategy is its humanitarian aid and development approach. The UAE foreign aid program, particularly in response to the Yemeni humanitarian crisis, underscores its commitment to global welfare. By being one of the largest donors of humanitarian aid to Yemen, the UAE has provided crucial assistance and positioned itself as a responsible and proactive global actor. This commitment to humanitarian

causes resonates strongly in international relations, bolstering the UAE soft power by enhancing its reputation as a compassionate and generous nation.

In addition to these initiatives, the UAE investment in renewable energy and its efforts in hosting the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) headquarters further illustrate the effectiveness of its public diplomacy. These actions align with global sustainability and climate change concerns, presenting the UAE as a forward-thinking and responsible global citizen. This strategic alignment with global priorities enhances the UAE influence and demonstrates its commitment to addressing critical international issues, further reinforcing its position in soft power.

From an author's perspective, the UAE public diplomacy strategy is a well-crafted amalgamation of cultural, humanitarian, and technological initiatives that collectively enhance its global standing. The UAE ability to project a positive and progressive image while actively engaging in meaningful global issues indicates its successful public diplomacy. By understanding and leveraging the nuances of soft power, the UAE has effectively positioned itself as a dynamic and influential player on the international stage. The UAE approach exemplifies how strategic public diplomacy, when aligned with a nation's broader goals and values, can significantly enhance its influence and image in the complex tapestry of global relations.

Sixth, if the UAE accepts Western cultural programs, it could be charged with cultural appropriation and a lack of authenticity, which would go against the intended outcome. Accepting Western cultural programs poses a risk of cultural appropriation and a perceived lack of authenticity for the UAE, primarily because such programs might need to align more with the nation's unique cultural identity and heritage. Authenticity in cultural expression is crucial for maintaining the integrity and distinctiveness of a nation's cultural heritage. Adopting Western cultural programs without adapting them to the local context can dilute the UAE rich

cultural narrative and traditions, which are integral to its national identity. This incongruence may diminish the cultural relevance to its citizens and undermine the authenticity of the UAE cultural portrayal on the global stage. The perception of cultural appropriation, where another culture adopts elements of another culture without sensitivity and proper contextualization, can lead to criticism and backlash. It could negate the benefits of cultural exchange by creating a narrative of cultural dominance rather than mutual respect and understanding. For the UAE, which aims to project an image of a modern yet culturally rich and authentic nation, striking a balance between embracing global cultural influences and preserving its unique cultural heritage is essential for the effectiveness of its public diplomacy and soft power strategy.

The report recommends establishing state-level standardized soft power plans and constructing an interactive government media platform where average citizens might take part in the development of policies in order to satisfy concerns about openness. On the model of the Federal National Council, it is proposed that the Soft Power Council[48] be institutionalized, with some members appointed and some elected. The UAE must create a complete understanding of soft power that is compatible with both its own traditions and customs and the international definition of soft power in order to achieve the best results. Soft power is based on mutual attraction, hence in order to attract others, one needs to utilize methods to achieve this power. To achieve the necessary results, tools are accessible for all types of powers. One of at least three general soft power instruments is where power and its "softness" come from. They are what they are: "Benignity, attractiveness, and brilliance" (Vuving, 2009, p. 8).

Diplomatic Kindness Impact: The first tool is benignity, which is characterized as tolerance or care for others. The objective is to be nice and helpful to others, but we cannot confine the meaning to a specific format. In the same way that someone should treat others well when they

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[48] A proposed structured body within the UAE government, designed to oversee and direct the nation's soft power initiatives, with a blend of appointed and elected members. The Council aims to integrate public opinion into policy development, enhancing transparency and effectiveness in the UAE soft power strategies in line with local traditions and global standards.

are kind to them, so too should they act in a non-threatening or non-confrontational manner when they value or appreciate others. Being kind or performing acts of kindness holds the promise of benignity; people who are kind are more likely to be loved by others since they are likely to be attentive of others' feelings and unlikely to cause them harm (Vuving, 2009, p. 9). The beneficial use of soft power as a diplomatic tool boosts a nation's credibility and dependability. For instance, the UAE spends more per capita than any other country on earth on help to build other nations, and it is one of the largest financial benefactors of refugees from war-torn zones, according to a 2016 assessment by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2017).

The second tool is brilliance, which denotes a nation's superior abilities or intelligence in a variety of forms. In terms of international relations, brilliance take the form of a potent military, a prosperous and thriving economy, a dynamic and rich culture, or a tranquil and well-functioning society. A "bright" nation is one with significant capabilities, such as cutting-edge technology. Being successful entails developing capacities, which is compelling proof of aptitude. Successful people have long drawn admiration from others, in large part because of their aptitude for problem solving and capacity for overcoming obstacles (Vuving, 2009, p. 10).

As the final bastion of political and economic stability in the Middle East, as demonstrated by the persistence and effectiveness of their monarchical and conventional forms of governance, the UAE and the GCC states stand out as outstanding instances of "brilliance" in this dangerous region (Wolfsfeld, & Gadi, 1997). The GCC member states' citizens' welfare, development, and security have all been preserved by this system of government. The UAE has emerged as a case study due to its rapid economic development in comparison to most developing and Arab nations, who have been states for a much longer period of time but have yet to achieve the same level of economic and developmental success as the nation, since its

independence in 1971. Brilliant work is rewarded with acceptance and admiration because the more successful a person or a nation is at anything, the safer and more effective it is for others to learn from that person or country. As a result, it can result in a wide range of outcomes (both good and bad), including imitation, emulation and respect, terror and veneration. In international relations, a nation's accomplishments serve as a template that many other nations may follow entirely or in part. Being liked, respected, and accepted can also strengthen ties with allies and foster mutual understanding and cooperation (Vuving, 2009, p. 10).

The third tool is *"Beauty,"* "the characteristic or aggregate of attributes in a person or object that brings pleasure to the senses or pleasurably exalts the mind or spirit, or: a particularly graceful, beautiful, or excellent quality" (Webster, 2018). "Beauty" in international politics is the resonance that brings participants together from shared principles, values, causes, or visions (Weaver, 2007). It enables gaining a sense of stability, hope, self-worth, identity, and community as well as satisfaction and admiration. When people work together to implement shared beliefs, objectives, causes, or dreams, beauty can result. Contrary to opposing values and reasons, which enable either party to perceive the other as ugly, shared values and causes motivate people to perceive the other regime as beautiful, which fosters self-assurance, friendliness, and cooperation. These are all descriptions that turn beauty into soft power, enticing people to emulate and learn from your example (Vuving, 2009, p. 12).

3.6.2   Utility boundaries, and possible influencing factors of public diplomacy

The primary goal of public diplomacy is to build soft power, but it raises the question of whether it can solve major issues by changing how targeted populations view them. Can public diplomacy succeed in restricted areas where its influence could be beneficial? These questions are negative. This limits public diplomacy's utility and influence. First, public diplomacy is unlikely to affect territorial security "high politics." Whether we consider U.S. public diplomacy in the Middle East since the 21st century or China and Japan's recent Diaoyu

Islands public relations campaigns, this is true. Public diplomacy cannot explain why Middle Eastern people do not recognize U.S. interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Libya or why Chinese and Japanese citizens support their governments' territorial claims. Dialogue and trust-building are ineffective for territorial security, especially in zero-sum situations where one side gains at the expense of the other. Even the most convincing narratives will not convince a population to give up territorial claims or accept "legal" foreign involvement in disputed areas. For territorial security and similar disputes, public diplomacy is limited.

Second, certain factors will affect its effectiveness even in public diplomacy regions. The first is inevitable tension between a rising nation and its competitors, which can undermine public diplomacy. Stressed public diplomacy between China and Japan is an example. The Chicago Global View 2008 survey placed Japan fourth among countries least favorable to China, behind South Korea, Indonesia, and Vietnam. The survey found that 89% of Japanese people were uncomfortable with China becoming Asia's superpower. This challenge is illustrated by China-Japan tensions. Dinnie and Lio (2008) interviewed reveal the issues. One reporter said, "The Japanese people and their elected representatives, sensitive to China's growing influence and acutely aware of Japan's weaknesses, are unsettled by China's growing power and Japan's increasing economic dependence on China." Another director of the Japanese Cultural and Political Institution said that the main concern is that as China rises, Japan will decline. Due to this anxiety, China faces a major challenge in promoting itself in Japan.

Political system differences also hinder public diplomacy. China European public diplomacy has suffered from this issue. According to Dutch scholar D'Hooghe, Europe worries more about China's domestic issues than the U.S. After 2006, the "China hype" gave way to growing apprehension about a rising China and dissatisfaction with its human rights record and lack of political reforms, lowering China's favorability rating in Europe. China's public

diplomacy suffers from this political system and value gap, especially in Europe, where human rights and political freedoms are paramount.

The presence of national prejudice, demonstrating how assessments of a nation's political system are frequently unreasonable. People frequently support a certain political system not because it is effective but rather because their ideologies and beliefs are compatible with it. On the other hand, cost-benefit factors prevent an executive from altering their regime in order to 'please' the citizens of the target country. This indicates that China cannot reform its own political system on its own initiative or win over Westerners by proving the viability (superiority) of its own political system. In this regard, it is challenging to totally prevent the detrimental effects of the different political systems on the public opinion of the target nation, or on the influence of public diplomacy.

Political ties between nations are the third component. According to a study the author conducted on the empirical assessment of the effects of China's public diplomacy in six nations, this aspect has considerably influenced the people's perceptions of China in the United States and the United Kingdom, albeit in different ways. China-US relations negatively affect the favorable perception of China among Americans. The US public will view China less favorably the better the US-China relations get. In the meantime, the UK's favorable perception of China is positively influenced by the political ties between the two countries. Undoubtedly, more investigation is required to understand why bilateral political ties should have such conflicting outcomes. However, it should be quite assured that the issue of public diplomacy's impact being subordinate to the degree of political and security connections.

Each of the aforementioned elements is likely to influence (either bring down or increase) people's goodwill toward the implementing country to varying degrees. Therefore, when these variables coexist with the public diplomacy activities themselves, we are unable to determine whether or not the public diplomacy activities conducted towards the country are

successful based simply on the decline or increase in favorable opinion. Instead, we must carefully limit these interfering variables' influence using demanding research designs.

3.6.3 Public diplomacy use in the "high politics" of territorial security

Public diplomacy effectiveness often includes soft power. Public diplomacy aims to use a nation's soft power to attract a target nation. These efforts may fail in "high politics," like territorial security. Even when public diplomacy works, external factors can interfere. To accurately measure public diplomacy's impact, research design must be improved, and these variables must be eliminated. Public diplomacy experts must research how to evaluate public diplomacy activities. Without accurate assessments, it will be difficult to assess current strategies, the potential success of public diplomacy policy initiatives, and which areas or projects merit future investment. Thus, empirical assessment and scientific evaluation should be the main focus of public diplomacy research, linking research to policy and practice. To evaluate public diplomacy accurately, its role, scope, and measurement methods must be defined.

Public diplomacy turns a nation's assets into soft power resources that other nations like or support. It aims to change attitudes toward the implementing culture, values, and policies from ignorance to favorability. Whether a public diplomacy initiative positively changes the target audience's perception of the implementing country's aspect determines its success. Public diplomacy has limitations and may not work in all conflict zones. Public diplomacy is less effective in "high politics," like territorial security, but it can be helpful to elsewhere. Political shifts, political systems, and international relations affect its success. Thus, defining public diplomacy's role and functions will improve its impact assessment.

3.6.4 Media and Communication

Marshall McLuhan (1962) stressed that the globe has transformed into a "global village" while describing the media landscape more than fifty years ago. This appeared to be a prophecy at the time, but in modern times, it is a reality. The "global village" has emerged as a result of globalization, and this has been made possible by the quick growth of information technology and global media (Dalgish, 2006). The world we live in today is shaped by technology (Fu, 2019): social media has led young people to absorb more information, and digital technologies are utilized to mobilize society and politics (Newman, 2021). The "global theater" has replaced McLuhan's "global village" as a result of these contemporary technologies and media (Ralón, 2017). State and non-state actors convey political messages via the media in this global "village" or "theatre," even between nations that do not have diplomatic ties with one another (Saliu, 2018; Saliu & Llunji, 2022), or publicly with state actors of other nations even during times of war. Typically, heads of state speak to their own populace, but they also frequently bring up global issues in their speeches, which have an effect both domestically and internationally (Zarabozo, 2020), especially as these are frequently connected to populist foreign policy strategies (Bustinduy, 2022). In contrast, political actors speak in two dimensions. The first is the degree of universality, where the head of state or government speaks on matters of relevance to all people; the second is the degree to which the political figurehead of a nation can be viewed as a prominent and visible national emblem (Peres et al., 2020). Additionally, in the modern era, political actors communicate with overseas audiences via technology (Manor, 2019).

Communication has become crucial to international relations and diplomacy in recent years. Over the past two decades, research has shown that public diplomacy—a term used by international communications experts—was once less defined. Diplomats' interpersonal communication and negotiation skills were traditionally kept secret. In 1860, British Foreign

Minister Lord Palmerston declared, "This is the end of diplomacy," after seeing the telegraph work (Washburn, 1978). Telegraphy was touted as a revolutionary way to send messages long distances between parties. Media and diplomacy are often considered "two different types of communication that operate through separate channels" (Cohen, 1986, p. 6). Diplomacy involves private, formal negotiations, statements, and policy positions between nations. The media informs the public about international events. Information is crucial to international relations, whether for interpersonal communication or to foster mutual understanding and familiarity between nations and their peoples (Masmoudi, 1981).

However, diplomacy has always been open, meaning that the message intended for a foreign nation or government may be made public. In this regard, media involvement in diplomacy occasionally protects sensitive information by acting as messengers of diplomatic messages, but occasionally also manufactures diplomatic incidents or purposeful manipulations to further a particular agenda (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 73). According to Cohen (1986), media diplomacy rose to prominence in the 19th century as a result of the American, British, and French press's increased interest in foreign news. However, "concepts and visualization of media diplomacy have been sparsely studied from an international communication perspective" (Lim, 2017, p. 11).

The transformation of the media landscape into a "global village," as prophesied by Marshall McLuhan in 1962, has profound implications for modern diplomacy, particularly for nations like UAE. With the advent of global media and information technology, traditional diplomatic channels have evolved, making public diplomacy and media engagement indispensable components of international relations. Recognizing this shift, the UAE has adapted its diplomatic strategy to align with these changes. The nation's recent launch of a new media strategy in September 2023 is a testament to its commitment to leveraging media to advance its foreign policy and public diplomacy objectives. This strategy aims to harness the

power of global media to project the UAE narratives and perspectives, thereby enhancing its soft power and global influence.

In this *"global theater,"* the role of the media in shaping international perceptions and relationships has become more crucial than ever. For the UAE, engaging with international audiences through media provides an opportunity to communicate its policies, culture, and values effectively. This approach has been particularly significant in countering misinformation and fostering a positive image of the UAE globally. Utilizing various media platforms, the UAE seeks to create a narrative that resonates with global audiences, emphasizing its role as a progressive, peaceful, and innovative nation. Therefore, the new media strategy is not merely about disseminating information but also about strategically shaping perceptions and building international relationships.

The effectiveness of this strategy can be evaluated through various metrics and outcomes, such as the reach and impact of the UAE media content, the perception of the UAE in international surveys, and the level of engagement with its digital diplomacy initiatives. By tracking these indicators, the UAE can assess the success of its new media strategy in enhancing its soft power. Continuous monitoring and analysis of these metrics will enable the UAE to refine its approach, ensuring its media strategy remains effective in a rapidly changing global media landscape. The UAE proactive approach to media diplomacy, combined with its traditional diplomatic endeavors, positions it as a modern, dynamic player in the complex world of international relations.

In an age of global media and information access, political leaders can effectively communicate a nation's foreign policy goals to domestic audiences. Promoting national interests and shaping their public image achieves this (Peres et al., 2020). This type of communication empowers global societies while strengthening ethnocentric views (Baraldi, 2006). These platforms challenge and spread propaganda (Modjtahedi & Szpunar, 2022).

Media is used for international communication and diplomacy in "media diplomacy" (Lim, 2017; Shinar, 2000; Cohen, 1986). Policymakers use media to communicate with foreign governments and the public: "Media diplomacy addresses how the media relate policymakers to foreign governments and the public" (Cohen, 1986, p. 8). Eytan Gilboa (2001) defined media diplomacy is widely used. Gilboa defines media diplomacy as political actors using media to communicate with international states and non-state entities to build consensus. He also defines "media diplomacy" as government representatives using the media to build trust, encourage dialogue, and gain public support for diplomatic agreements with state and non-state actors (Gilboa, 2001, p. 10).

Since the 19th century, global information has increased. The Times of London had a war reporter covering the Crimean War in the 1850s, and between 1858 and 1868, seven London daily newspapers signed news journalism contracts with Reuters, and the Press Association started providing local media with worldwide news (Cohen, 1986). The Daily Telegraph had reporters in Berlin, New York, Paris, and St. Petersburg on the eve of World War I. Later, especially after World War II, when more attention was paid to global information, television came to dominate (Cohen, 1986).

The global nuclear arms race benefited from media diplomacy during the Cold War. For instance, in the use of media diplomacy, the US and the USSR engaged in a vigorous fight to shape unfavorable impressions of each other around the world. Thus, during a 1957 interview with American television station CBS, Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Union, advocated for a peaceful coexistence and helped usher in a new era of worldwide political dialogue (Laurano, 2006). The Soviet secretary actually aimed to assuage the poor international perception of the USSR with this instance of media diplomacy. Its disregard for the rights of citizens in Warsaw Pact nations had gotten worse; in 1956, just one year earlier, the Soviets had intervened militarily in Hungary. A further early example in this regard was also provided

by the American president John F. Kennedy, who, cognizant of the significance of media influence and the conventional approaches used by the White House, addressed the American public directly rather than through journalists, urging them to "participate in the presidency." As a result, the first live television broadcast from the White House took place on January 25, 1961, when 418 journalists were able to question the President using the first wireless microphones. That telecast was seen by 60 million people (Laurano, 2006).

Global TV networks have likewise opened up new global chances for diplomatic manipulation, misinformation, and propaganda. Political leaders might, for instance, make a remark that is broadcast live on regional or international TV stations in the hopes that it would have the impact necessary to undermine or thwart the objectives of the opposition party. Saddam Hussein, the dictator of Iraq, purportedly said he accepted the demands of the Western allies during the First Gulf War in 1990. When all the preparations were complete and just before the field attacks started, this declaration was made. The claim that a nation that had agreed to the terms was being attacked served only to sway public opinion worldwide (Gilboa, 2002). Because of this, instantaneous worldwide diplomatic communication is made possible through media, most notably television (Newman, 2021). This has led to new difficulties, conundrums, and anxieties for those participating in political processes. For political leaders, this entails how to handle the requirement for quick reactions to issues as well as how to handle perplexing and difficult developments without being seen as a weak leader. It is necessary to incorporate all of this into a single message that is appealing to both home and international audiences (Gilboa, 2002, p. 25-26).

Recently, it has become clear that the main reason why those who create and support foreign policy gain widespread attention is a simple one: in modern times, every comment made in any part of the world does not necessarily need to be transmitted through traditional diplomatic channels. However, because of the media, such sentiments can quickly go viral

around the globe. In actuality, unlike in the past, foreign policy is now also carried out through the media and not merely on the basis of government declarations. An actual instance occurred when, in 2008, while visiting Tanzania, American President George W. Bush told the media that the United States of America supported Kosovo's declaration of independence the day after it had happened (ABC News, 2008). During serious international crises, "officials frequently use worldwide television rather than established diplomatic channels to relay signals," or "the media sometimes provides the only route for dialogue and settlement between hostile players" (Gilboa, 2001, p. 11). There are numerous such instances of this kind, as Gilboa notes:

> In 1979–1981, the US communicated with Iran hostage-takers solely through media. The final ultimatum to Saddam Hussein was delivered via CNN by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker during the 1990-91 Gulf War. In January 1998, Iranian President Mohammed Khatami used CNN to reconcile with the US (Gilboa, 2001, p. 11).

A political statement that influences bilateral or multilateral ties today, whether it be to a neighboring state or a country on the other side of the world, is a direct message sent from one government to another and delivered in real time. Even hostile nations, like Iran and Israel, can engage in this bilateral communication; for instance, the media frequently publishes pronouncements from Tehran and the swift answers from Israel (Pahlavi, 2012). This shows that even if these conversations are carried out remotely, they can frequently take place between nations that do not have diplomatic relations. Hashim Thaçi, Kosovo's prime minister, declared in Pristina in February 2009 that Russia will also recognize Kosovo's independence (Top Channel, 2009). Sergei Lavrov, the foreign minister of Russia, responded right away. He said that Russia's position on the issue has not altered since Moscow. This example indicates, as Evan Potter (2002) notes, that the management of state affairs is now more difficult than ever

due to the increased chances for access, speed, and copious distribution of news and information to a global audience in real-time.

Using the Media to Promote Conflict Resolution Public diplomacy and media diplomacy are sometimes confused. Van Dinh argued that public diplomacy is propaganda and that it has "become synonymous with TV diplomacy" after characterizing it as such. Television is used by politicians and diplomats to spread internal and worldwide propaganda. However, the majority of the instances he provided for TV diplomacy did not qualify as propaganda. President Kennedy's 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis televised ultimatum to the USSR, President Nixon's 1972 trip to China, and President Sadat's 1977 trip to Jerusalem were not propaganda maneuvers; rather, they were intended to bring an end to crises and hostilities. It should be noted that this concept attempts to define media diplomacy as being both a component of and somewhat apart from public diplomacy. Public diplomacy, according to Former, is "any endeavor to influence journalistic portrayals of events, personalities, or agreements on behalf of a nation-state." By using the media to explain and advance foreign policy "media diplomacy" as defined by Ebo.

The academic and professional sectors have various definitions and interpretations of public diplomacy, a communication-based endeavor. "Referring to the communication-based operations of governments and state-sanctioned actors targeted at non-state groups in other nations with the hope of accomplishing foreign policy aims and objectives" is one description that could adequately describe it (Sevin, 2015; 563). Therefore, public diplomacy can be seen as a development of conventional state-to-state diplomacy. Tom Fletcher, a British ambassador, perfectly encapsulated diplomacy. In his own words, he said that "diplomacy is Darwinian" on his Twitter feed. In other words, diplomacy is something that is continuously changing in order to successfully achieve the goals and objectives of policy in a world that is constantly changing.

A direct type of "government to people communication" is made possible by this method of communication. It creates opportunities for direct interaction with a foreign public in an effort to affect and mold their political relationships, perceptions, and opinions. According to Fominykh (2010, p. 69) "both countries are effectively exercising their soft power politics through extensive communication initiatives, including positive interpretation of their foreign policy and, more lately, widespread use of the Internet". Global publics can be reached through media channels, and the Internet in particular can do so without being subject to the gatekeeping procedures seen in traditional mainstream media. Media diplomacy facilitates agenda setting, socialization, and strategic coordination at a time when government-to-government mechanisms of contact between Western governments and Russia are in a politically dysfunctional state of being (Pamment, 2014, p. 277). This is accomplished through including the audience in discussions on policies or issues. A developing projected acquaintance with aspects of another culture, identity, and way of thinking develops during socialization. The utilization of the information/communication program as a supplementary component to the political program is referred to as the strategic coordination aspect (policy aims and objectives).

According to the term "media democracy" the media and mediated communication have a major impact on political figures, institutions at both macro and micro levels, and ordinary citizens. This concept is linked to "media society." theory. This suggests that traditional mass media and new digital platforms are now deeply integrated into every aspect of social life, making them essential for communication and interaction (Mediatization of Society). Because of functional differentiation, media have become more independent from their former patrons, mostly political parties and religious institutions, especially in Europe. Today's media logic is driven by commercial interests seeking to grow their audience for

economic reasons. Despite societal changes, communication technology (Commercialization of the Media) contributed to this transformation (Gilboa, 2002; Saliu, 2022).

Like "media-centred democracies" (Plasser, 2004), "mediated politics" (Bennett & Entman, 2001), and the "mediatization of politics" (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999), "media democracy" points to changing political dynamics. Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) call these frameworks the "third age of political communication." They indicate major structural changes in the public sphere and political communication system. Political communication is being redefined in this media-rich era. Political messaging is becoming more professional, political actors are competing more, political communication methods are diversifying, and the public is engaging with and understanding political issues differently.

Media and mediated communication is crucial to modern democracies, hence "media democracy." It affects macro-level political actors, institutions, and micro-level citizens, making it significant. Media democracy implies that media strongly influences political outcomes and public opinion. The idea of "media society," which holds that traditional mass media and new digital platforms are now essential to society and daily life, is closely related. The "Medialization of Society." occurs when these media dominate how people and institutions communicate. Functional differentiation has given the media greater independence from its traditional supporters, particularly European political parties and religious organizations, fostering a media society. The media has developed its operational logic, driven by commercial concerns and audience growth to meet economic needs. Commercial imperatives have replaced political or ideological alignment in the media. Communication technology also shaped the media landscape (Commercialization of the Media).

Besides technological advancement, societal changes have affected media independence and commercialization, reflecting the complexity of social change. Media organizations' interactions with political, social, and economic structures have changed

(Gilboa, 2002; Saliu, 2022). The media is now largely self-contained and driven by commercial interests, but it still helps democratic systems communicate and interact. "Media democracy" aligns with "media-centred democracies" (Plasser, 2004), "mediated politics" (Bennett & Entman, 2001), and "mediatization of politics" (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) call the structural changes in the public sphere and political communication system the "third age of political communication." An explosion of media outlets has transformed political communication through the professionalization of political messaging, increased competition among political figures, diversification of communication strategies, and changing audience perspectives on political matters.

Media influence causes changes in media events, pseudo-events, mediated populism, mediated terrorism, and symbolic politics. Governments, parties, and other organizations use strategic communication, political consultants and spin doctors to shape the public agenda (Issue Management in Politics; Professionalization of Public Relations). Public relations practices targeting political elites may affect their democracy (Jarren & Donges, 2006). Content analyses show that media representations of politics are more complex, negative, sensationalized, and entertaining (Quantitative Content Analysis; Horse Race Coverage; Negativity; Tabloidization). This changing media landscape may affect public perceptions of politics, trust in democratic institutions, and political engagement (Political Cynicism; Political Efficacy; Video Malaise).

As the "primary media" for public communication, television is credited with playing a significant part in these processes. It is believed that television has the ability to mold and distort reality through its visual pictures (Construction of Reality through the News; Media and Perceptions of Reality; Television News, Visual Components of). Additionally, it is believed that televised reporting of political events, particularly during election campaigns, leads to a rising personalization of politics (Personalization of Campaigning). The dispute over alleged

political changes was increased by the growth of commercial television because these programs cover relatively little institutional politics and instead focus on entertainment, fostering politainment and the entertainification [49] of politics. Like television, most other forms of media are gradually becoming more commercialized. Due to their reliance on sponsorship, advertising, and PR materials, they are forced to adjust to economic actors and serve the needs of niche target audiences. Commercialization has caused the media system to become more distinct and fragmented, which is accelerating (Commercialization: Impact on Media Content) (Gilboa, 2002; Saliu, 2022).

3.6.5 *Causes of the Media-Politics Relationship's Changes*

Public service broadcasting declined in most Western European countries in the 1980s due to the introduction of commercial radio and television, which was initially seen as a trend toward Americanization. The current view is that these changes should be seen as part of a modernization process similar to many Western democracies rather than as Americanization (Swanson & Mancini, 1996). Many scholars believe the media now plays a crucial role in the political system and its actors, signaling a shift in media-politics relations. According to Kepplinger, mass media has gained power at the expense of traditional government institutions.

Politics has also become "mediatized," influenced by feedback loops between media coverage and political events or figures. Kepplinger (2002, p. 983) states, "What the media present as politics is partially the outcome of the media conditions." The media often harms politics by focusing on conflicts and scandals, contributing to its "dismantling." Meyer (2002) notes a decline in political institution trust during the transition from party democracy to media democracy. He claims the media has "colonized politics," causing "mediocrity." While Edelman (1964), Nimmo & Combs (1983), and Blumler (1990) did not use the term "media

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[49] To keep a person or a group of people interested or amused.

democracy," they provided valuable insights into the changing relationship between media and politics.

Most theoretical explanations are based on system theories that link political and media systems. Power redistribution, where the media becomes the "Fourth Estate"; media dominance and dependence, which examines whether the media dominates politics or vice versa; and interdependence or symbiosis, which emphasizes a reciprocal relationship between media and politics. The first paradigm assumes media autonomy, while the second paradigm is based on power and control hypotheses, particularly about media and politics' shifting ability to maximize influence. The third paradigm suggests a mutual relationship where media and politics influence each other depending on the context. Different normative understandings of politics and the media's unique societal roles, power, and autonomy underpin these three paradigms. The structural transformation and functional differentiation associated with media democracy are not solely media effects. Despite limited empirical data supporting these macro-level hypotheses, these changes are not solely media-driven. At the micro- and meso-levels, empirically redefining media-politics interactions from the assumption of their interdependence seems useful.

3.7   Governance

Laws, customs, and behaviors are structured, upheld, regulated, and made accountable through governance. The level of formality is influenced by the internal norms of a social group. As a result, governance can assume various forms, be driven by different motivations, and lead to diverse outcomes. A government might, for instance, operate as a democracy where citizens choose the leaders. A large number of outside parties with little decision-making authority could also have an impact on politics. These include the neighborhood, the political parties, non-governmental organizations as well as media (Dingwerth, & Pattberg, 2009; Gökalp, 2020; Koppell, 2010). The term "governance" is frequently used to refer to a specific

"level" of governance associated with a particular type of organization (such as public governance, global governance, non-profit governance, corporate governance, and project governance), a specific "field" of governance associated with a particular type of activity or outcome, or a specific "model" of governance, frequently derived as an empirical or normative concept (such as regulatory governance, participatory governance, and democratic governance), or any combination of these (Dingwerth, & Pattberg, 2009; Gökalp, 2020; Koppell, 2010).

Agendas that are normative or useful may also be defined as governance. Political, governmental, non-profit, and private sector organizations all share normative notions of fair governance. The behaviours and practices that create and maintain stable behaviours are referred to as governance in its most theoretical definition. These methods and actions can be utilized in formal and informal implementation of any scale for any goal—good or bad, successful or unsuccessful. The majority of conceptions of governance as process have their roots in neoclassical economics. These theories offer deductive models that are based on contemporary economic presuppositions to show how rational agents can establish and sustain formal organizations, like businesses and states, as well as informal organizations, like networks and conventions for the management of commons. Economic theory of transaction costs is extensively cited in these concepts (Gökalp, 2020; Scherer, 2018).

Governance and politics are distinct but related. *Politics* is the process by which a group of people, frequently with divergent viewpoints or interests, decides collectively on matters of public policy and then generally agrees on those decisions. Governance, on the other hand, emphasizes administrative and procedural aspects of ruling rather than opposing traits. This suggests that the traditional separation of "politics" and "administration" may still be relevant. As "governance" and "politics" now include power dynamics and accountability, contemporary governance theory and practice challenge this divide (Marschlich & Ingenhoff, 2019; Wang et

al., 2018). Public governance usually uses one of three methods: public-private partnerships or community organizations. The second approach uses market-based mechanisms to allocate resources under government regulation using competition principles. Government and state bureaucracies dominate the third strategy, which is hierarchical and top-down (Marschlich & Ingenhoff, 2019). These methods show that governance involves many actors and strategies to manage public resources and enforce policy. Governance emphasizes decision implementation and public institution accountability, unlike politics, which is often contentious and focused on power struggles.

The Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government (Figure 3.5), the first research and teaching institution in the Arab world focusing on governance and public policy, has developed an integrated system of education and training programs, research, and studies to support excellence in governance in the UAE and the Arab world. The UAE has also accumulated a reserve of "soft power," a senior official remarked during the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF) in the country. This is because of the nation's founding fathers' legacy, its generous humanitarian assistance, and its alluring higher education options. A nation's leader has the greatest impact on that nation's soft power, according to Saeed Mohammad Al Eter, director-general of the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Future's Public Diplomacy Office and secretary-general of the UAE Soft Power Council, in his IGCF speech on soft power (The Embassy of UAE, 2022).

Figure 3.5: Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government

Soft power, according to Al Eter, is the capacity to "make others fall in love with your principles, culture, way of life, and leaders." It influences how the outside world sees you, and how that affects how others treat you. He asserted that the late Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the first president of the UAE and a figurehead known as the Founding Father, enhanced the country's reputation through his contacts with other countries. Because we are all Zayed's children, "UAE is still reaping the benefits of this positivity today, and our leadership upholds this legacy," as concluded by Al Eter (The Embassy of UAE, 2022).

3.8   UAE Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the UAE has been studied extensively, as demonstrated by the wide range of literature referenced above. Abass (2019) notes that the UAE is the most stable Arab nation in the Middle East. This stability, coupled with the robust economy recognized by Augustine (2018), who highlighted the UAE impressive ranking in the World Bank's Ease of

doing business report, provides a strong foundation for the UAE foreign policy. These elements enhance the UAE position as a reliable and attractive partner in international relations (Alzaabi, 2019). Numerous authors (Abdi et al., 2019; Abdulilah & Khan, 2019; Al Suwaidi, 2021; Al et al., 2019; AlKetbi, 2017; Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2021, 2022) have discussed the significance of soft power in UAE foreign policy. They argue that the UAE investments in sports diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and its commitment to creating a positive international image are essential to its soft power strategy. These strategies allow the UAE to influence the international stage beyond traditional means of power.

In addition, Al Hallaq et al. (2021) discusses how hosting mega-events, such as EXPO 2020 in Dubai, can enhance a country's reputation and attract global attention. Additionally, initiatives like the Emirates Mars Mission (Almatroushi et al., 2020) underscore the UAE commitment to technological advancement and innovation, reinforcing its soft power. Al Tayer (2019) suggests that the UAE efforts in empowering women reflect its commitment to gender equality, which can positively affect the country's international standing. This is particularly relevant in human rights discourses in foreign policy. The role of media in shaping the UAE foreign policy is another recurring theme. Alabdalkarim (2019) studies the branding of television news channels in the Arab World. Bagersh (2011) discusses the changing roles in the UAE media world, implicitly acknowledging the importance of media in promoting the UAE foreign policy goals and influencing public opinion. UAE relations with other nations are a significant part of its foreign policy. Albert (2018) looks at China's soft power and its impact on international relations, which could also apply to the UAE relationships. Almezaini's work (2012) on UAE foreign aid signifies its global partnerships and alliances, which are vital in furthering the UAE foreign policy objectives.

Moreover, Arndt (2005) and Banks (2011) argue that cultural diplomacy and ethical action in international relations can boost a country's reputation, which could be applied to the

UAE public diplomacy strategies. Anholt (1998) and Al-Suwaidi (2019) also explore the construction of national identities and their significance in international relations, which is crucial to the UAE image-building efforts. To conclude, the UAE foreign policy is multi-faceted, combining traditional elements of power with the innovative use of soft power, cultural diplomacy, media influence, and strategic alliances. The nation's stability, economic vibrancy, and commitment to societal development further strengthen its position in international relations.

The UAE pledged to uphold the UN treaties and the law when it joined the organization in 1971. The preservation of world peace and security, the defense of human rights, the delivery of humanitarian aid, the encouragement of sustainable development, and the reinforcement of international law are only a few of the goals of the UN (IMUNA, 2019) in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: UAE and its affiliated businesses

Major International & RegionalOrganizations	UN Specialized Agencies &Organizations
ABEDA: Arab Bank for EconomicDevelopment in Africa	CTBTO: Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
AFESD: Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development	WTO: World Trade Organization
AMF: Arab Monetary Fund	WMO: World Meteorological Organization
BIS: Bank for International Settlements	WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organization
CAEU: Council of Arab Economic Unity	WHO: World Health Organization
CICA: Conference of Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia	WBG: World Bank Group
ICRM: International Red Cross and RedCrescent Movement	UPU: Universal Postal Union
IDB: Islamic Development Bank	UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism

	Organization
IFRCS: International Federation of Red Crossand Red Crescent Societies	UNIDO: United Nations Industrial Development Organization
ICC: International Chamber of Commerce	UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council	OPCW: Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
IHO: International Hydrographic Organization	MIGA: Multilateral Investment GuaranteeAgency
IMSO: International Mobile SatelliteOrganization	ITU: International Telecommunications Union
Interpol: International Criminal Police Organization	IMO: International Maritime Organization
IOC: International Olympic Committee	FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
IPU: Inter-Parliamentary Union	IBRD: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ISO: International Organization for Standardization	IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency
ITSO: International TelecommunicationsSatellite Organization	ICSID: International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes
LAS/AL: League of Arab States, aka ArabLeague	IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development
OAPEC: Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries	IFC: International Finance Corporation
OIC: Organization of Islamic Cooperation	IDA: International Development Association
OIF: Organization international de la Francophonie	ILO: International Labor Organization
PCA: Permanent Court of Arbitration	ICAO: International Civil Aviation Organization

WCO: World Customs Organization (Figure 3.6)[50]	IMF: International Monetary Fund

Figure 3.6: World Customs Organization

3.9   People and Value

Experts say soft power benefits nations, citizens, businesses, and other organizations. Countries can attract tourists, investors, and traders by building a strong national brand and soft power perceptions and promoting high-quality goods and services. Soft power also lets nations improve relations with neighbours, promote their resources, and control their global narrative. A strong national brand and soft power can benefit domestically, but this is often overlooked. They can boost local tourism, promote homegrown products over imports, and, less obviously, change how citizens view their country. The country and its people benefit at home and abroad (Castillo, 2010; Li et al., 2021).

However, how can governments and key organizations evaluate and strengthen their soft power? First, measure soft power to assess the strengths and weaknesses. This analysis helps governments prioritize international reputation-building and policymaking.

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[50] The World Customs Organization (WCO) is an autonomous intergovernmental organization dedicated to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of customs administrations globally. The WCO plays a crucial role in developing global standards for customs procedures, facilitating international trade, and combating illegal activities at borders.

Accountability and benchmarking are essential for program success. Communication and education are also important. A national potential is often underutilized due to poor dissemination of its strengths and benefits. A strategic communications plan can solve such issues quickly. Understanding a national reputation, brand equity, and misconceptions is the first step to effective communication and soft power (Castillo, 2010; Jordan Times, 2022; Li et al., 2021).

The development of soft power is influenced by the culture, domestic policies, and values. For better or worse, the majority of the repercussions of our culture are outside the scope of the government's ability to influence. The government still has a lot of power, though. Much more work needs to be done in order to improve our public diplomacy overall. We can greatly improve both our broadcast and narrowcasting capabilities on the Internet. However, the basis for both should also be improved listening. Newt Gingrich asserts, "a new U.S. communication strategy should be regularly assessed on a country-by-country basis for effectiveness and impact. An unbiased public affairs firm should provide a weekly analysis of how American communications are received in at least the top 50 countries worldwide. We may choose relevant themes and narrow down our initial responses with the use of such an approach. We also need to considerably increase the amount we spend on soft power. We could easily afford to boost the funding designated for public diplomacy and to give it more attention and direction from the senior officials of the country (Castillo, 2010; Jordan Times, 2022; Li et al., 2021).

When assessing the UAE position, the focus will be on values, culture, foreign policy, and diplomatic relations. Each nation has a strategy in place, but not all nations have the same industry, traditions, or ideals. Alketbi (2017) discusses the newest initiative of the UAE, the establishment of its new soft-power council, and the establishment of ministries for acceptance and joy. An institutional structure for marketing the UAE both at home and internationally is

the soft-power council. McClory (2019) asserts that the East is gaining economic dominance over the West. In 2021, Brand Finance placed the UAE 18th out of the top 60 soft power nations. The UAE is the world's capital of humanity, promotes civilized ideas, and is a major humanitarian giver, claims AlKetbi (2017). To successfully spread fundamental beliefs, new methods, and techniques, several media consortiums are required on a local, national, and international level (AlKetbi, 2017). The subsequent research questions are as follows. The ability to use propaganda to influence people's minds, brains, or behavior constitutes the third type of power in international politics, according to Edward Hallett Carr (The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919–1939). Later, the Carr concept became associated with soft power. Soft power is the ability of a country to sway people without resorting to violence or coercion. Three things influence the attractiveness of a nation: its culture, political beliefs, and international relations.

The UAE attracts many tourists yearly, many of whom choose to stay and conduct business due to the country's high public safety standards and long-term political stability. The population or the ruling elite (Billard & Moran, 2020) have maintained this stability without violent uprisings. In a region rife with sectarianism, extremism, and terrorism, the UAE leadership has implemented effective preventative measures that have kept the country safe from such calamities. The UAE has created a global image of exceptionalism by maintaining stability in a turbulent environment. The World Bank's Political Stability Index, which assesses the likelihood of government destabilization through violent or illegal means, gave the UAE an average rating of 0.85 from 2006 to 2016, far exceeding the global average of -0.05 and leading the Middle East (The Global Economy, 2019). Furthermore, the UAE ranked 149th out of 178 countries on the Fragile States Index in 2019, making it the least unstable Arab country (Abass, 2019).

According to an Emirati expert, the UAE is a beacon of stability, prosperity, and peace in a volatile region, committed to fostering positive change for a better present and future.

According to the World Economic Forum, the UAE is the world's second safest country in terms of public safety. Surprisingly, in 2015, the UAE recorded only 110 violent crimes, placing it among the countries with the lowest rates of violent crime worldwide. The UAE also ranked fourth for the lowest assault rates and ninth for the lowest overall crime rates, outperforming the majority of developed Western nations (WEF).

3.10   International Cooperation

All professional endeavours geared toward helping those in need and advancing global economic, social, and cultural development fall under the umbrella of international cooperation. Humanitarian help, development cooperation, and peace advocacy are all areas of international collaboration. Activities in these fields, which were once clearly separated, are now convergent, making it difficult to define their boundaries (Chen, 2021; Soile, & Balogun, 2020). Poverty reduction and sustainable development are the goals of development cooperation. It is a partnership-based organization that operates locally, regionally, and globally. Development cooperation deals with long-term, structural transformation as opposed to humanitarian aid, which provides emergency aid during armed conflict and natural disasters. But it nevertheless frequently works in precarious situations (Ling, 2021; Stein, & Ahmed, 2007).

Economic cooperation and development's main objectives are to encourage sustainable growth on all fronts economic, social, and environmental and so reduce poverty and inequality, generate new jobs, and boost productivity. Integrating partner nations into the global economy and boosting the competitiveness of their domestic markets are key initiatives (Keijzer, et al., 2018; Ling, 2021). The fundamental circumstances necessary for sustainable development are established or strengthened through the promotion of peace and human security. Both military and non-military actions (soft power) can be taken to advance peace. Supporting free and transparent elections, bolstering human rights, creating police institutions that collaborate

closely with citizens, and creating an independent judiciary are just a few examples of the actions that are part of civil peacebuilding. Governmental level negotiations are also a part of it. Initiatives for peacebuilding are also supported by several community-sector players (Chen, 2021; Soile & Balogun, 2020).

Since international cooperation is necessary to provide a practical response to today's global challenges, public diplomacy efforts by various nations assist in establishing the forums for holding international discussions about shared concerns, fostering understanding, and laying the foundation for international cooperation. To sustain a high level of trust in public institutions, durable channels of communication between citizens and public authorities at the national, regional, and international levels must be developed. However, given the contested information environment of today, which is characterized by deception, doing so is becoming more difficult (Chen, 2021; Soile, & Balogun, 2020). Due to the aforementioned factors, the UAE Global Strategy highlighted the necessity to:

- Invest in and join-up public diplomacy across different fields,
- Offer rapid, factual rebuttals of disinformation, and
- Continue fostering an open and inquiring media environment within and beyond the country border are all necessary in addition to the need to "improve the consistency and speed of the principles and actions.

The UAE foreign policy prioritizes public diplomacy when implementing its global strategy. It emphasizes aligning and coordinating public diplomacy, including strategic communication, domestically and internationally. This allows for the creation and refining of a solid and effective UAE public diplomacy strategy. This philosophy guides UAE public diplomacy initiatives, including strategic communication, press and information, and misinformation prevention. By integrating these tools, the UAE can listen to diverse global audiences while maintaining a consistent, approachable narrative about its values.

Multilateralism, a rules-based global order, human rights, and gender equality underpin responsible global leadership. Public diplomacy helps promote mutual understanding and engagement in support of the UAE Global Gateway's priorities. This engagement produces sustainable, high-quality projects that uphold UAE values like the rule of law, human rights, and international standards. The UAE trusted global connectivity model invests in high-quality, secure, and clean infrastructure in partner nations to connect people, goods, and services globally sustainably and responsibly.

The UAE has launched many projects to improve global collaboration and build long-term relationships. These initiatives encourage networking and personal interactions with students, academics, youth organizations, think tanks, media professionals, business communities, civil society, and artists. These efforts strengthen UAE-international relations and promote worldwide understanding between UAE citizens and people. The factors underpin UAE public diplomacy projects, fostering local and international relations. The UAE values its global partnerships and thanks students, scholars, journalists, educators, artists, civil society members, local government officials, business leaders, and women's organizations for their support. These groups promote intercultural exchanges between the UAE and the world, helping the UAE international, regional, and local public diplomacy initiatives succeed. The UAE expands its influence by promoting global respect and cultural exchange through these collaborations.

The UAE growing global presence shows its role in globalization. UAE has one of the freest economies. Ships sailing to India and along the East African coast as far as Mozambique have established a longstanding tradition of trade in the Gulf region. Due to its business-friendly free zones and fast-growing economy, the UAE remains a global business hub. The GDP rose to $359 billion in 2020 due to its abundant natural resources. UAE has 10% of the world's oil and fifth-largest natural gas reserves. Oil exports account for 30% of the UAE GDP.

The UAE is a major energy consumer and exporter. The country is accelerating the discovery of new hydrocarbon reserves and leading the development and use of alternative energy sources as it diversifies its economy. This commitment maintains the UAE longstanding energy management reputation.

Diversifying its policies boosts UAE public diplomacy and opens new trade opportunities. The UAE launched an ambitious economic diversification initiative to reduce oil dependence and transition from a labour-intensive to a knowledge-, technology-, and skilled labor economy. The federal and Emirates governments have invested heavily in re-export trade, telecommunications, advanced technologies, tourism, aviation, renewable energy, and aluminum production. In 2017, the UAE launched its Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, solidifying its leadership in 4IR technologies and innovation. These innovative programs aim to empower the nation's youth, who are increasingly leading in business, government, research, and other fields. Arab youth consider the UAE the best place to live due to its many job opportunities.

Tourism has been crucial to the UAE economic diversification. Tourism and world-class airlines like Etihad and Emirates have driven economic growth. The UAE 2021 World Expo is expected to boost its profile and draw international visitors and business leaders. The UAE can capitalize on such events to boost its economy due to its strong leadership and global influence. UAE economy is one of the world's most dynamic due to its openness. For international trade, many business indices recommend doing business with the UAE. The UAE is one of the top 30 "most-networked countries," ahead of all Arab nations, including Italy, Turkey, and India, according to the World Economic Forum. AT Kearney ranked the UAE among the top 25 locations for providing business services to international companies in 2019. The UAE transparency and governance are also well-known. The UAE is among the top 25% of the least corrupt nations, according to Transparency International and the World Bank's

Worldwide Governance Indicators. US business leaders have also noted the strength of US-UAE economic ties. The US-UAE Business Council, founded in May 2007, shows this vital relationship. The Business Council has over 100 member companies from both nations as of 2023, highlighting the importance of these bilateral economic partnerships.

3.11   Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we learn how public diplomacy's primary function is communicating directly with foreign publics to foster understanding and positive perceptions of a nation's values, culture, policies, and ideals. This contrasts traditional diplomacy, which is typically conducted between governmental entities. As well, how does public diplomacy increase soft power and international relations? In addition, media and communication strengthen the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power in international relations. The boundaries of public diplomacy extend to activities such as cultural exchanges, international broadcasting, sponsored visits, educational scholarships, and other engagements aimed at fostering mutual understanding.

Public diplomacy can also include digital diplomacy, which leverages social media platforms and other digital tools to reach, engage, and influence foreign audiences. Another boundary is nation branding, which proactively manages a country's image to enhance its international reputation. This chapter develops the conceptual framework after reviewing the literature studies. Soft power, as opposed to hard power, which focuses on physical force or financial might, uses more integrated and cooperative strategies to persuade others to deliver what is needed. Instead of a quick fix, soft power methods typically involve long-term partnerships based on support and trust. Although political scientists have different opinions on how to define and use soft power, the fundamental ideas remain the same.

The UAE is one nation that has shown effectiveness in understanding and harnessing soft power for its prosperity. It has shown that a small country can improve its social, economic,

and political circumstances by taking advantage of its connections to other nations, organizations, and institutions. The UAE participation in international organizations like the UN and its good relations with adjacent, international, and regional nations have had a big impact on its political standing in the globe. The UAE developed partnerships with several nations on a cultural, economic, and humanitarian level in order to guarantee the country's integration with others is successful and long-lasting. One of the soft power strategies the UAE has used to position itself as a key participant on the world stage is the exchange of people, information, and resources with other countries.

On September 25, 2019, the UAE successfully launched the first Arab into space, marking a significant turning point in the country's technology and space goals (Pillai, 2019). UAE national Hazza Al Mansoori saluted with three fingers while traveling to the International Space Station (ISS) while holding the UAE flag in one hand. The event was cause for celebration not just in the UAE but in the entire Arab world. The UAE not only won accolades from all corners of the globe for this latest space accomplishment, but it also triumphed spectacularly in terms of its soft power strategy.

In both local and global media, there is currently an almost aggressive promotion of the UAE brand. The UAE impact today is proof of the numerous benefits of soft power. Nations like the UAE have previously shown the effectiveness of soft power. The nation has often demonstrated how employing soft power can be just as successful as utilizing strong force. In fact, the UAE is able to serve as a platform for globalist ideas because to soft power. Particularly for relatively tiny countries, soft power is increasingly regarded as a means of securing a seat at the table. This study demonstrates that soft power involves more than just cultural influence. It is essential in affecting national policies and opinions among the UAE general populace. However, caution is advised because soft power is a theory that is constantly evolving. This highlights the need of academics thoroughly researching soft power tactics.

According to the report, the UAE has effectively used its own soft power in a variety of areas of its foreign policy. Due to its achievement in upholding democratic values as the only federal state in the Gulf that has not only endured but also flourished in the face of challenging geopolitical circumstances, the nation is very attractive to people all over the world. The success of the UAE federal model in light of the rise in separatist movement in some regions has also improved the nation's reputation, which has led to increased admiration for it. The UAE will really continue to improve its reputation and, consequently, its soft power because it is recognized as an affluent, stable nation with a tolerant populace.

Each of these traits will increase the success of foreign policy in the short- and medium-term. This nation's political stability may be seen from the fact that neither the populace nor the governing class have ever experienced political instability. The UAE administration has put in place preventive measures that have insulated the nation from any of the aforementioned evils in a region that is rife with sectarianism, extremism, and terrorism. As a result, two of the UAE keys draws for the thousands of tourists and business travelers that visit the country each year are the nation's long-standing political stability and high levels of public safety.

First off, soft power resources are distributed among a variety of stakeholders as opposed to hard power resources, which are often concentrated under the jurisdiction of the government. Diplomats who are state appointees who are skilled in precise and accurate communication with their counterparts often oversee the state's external relations. The advancement of communications technology has made it feasible for practically everyone to function as an emissary for their country today through interactions with individuals abroad, even though these formal channels are still crucial. The Deputy Prime Minister of the UAE highlighted direct interpersonal communication, commonly referred to as "new public diplomacy," when the soft power plan was unveiled: "The duty of the UAE reputation is also the obligation of any person and group in the UAE." 2017 Gulf News.

The problem is that diverse non-state actors frequently spread ideas and imagery that do not always line up with what the authorities want. In order to use private groups' and individuals' creativity while maintaining a somewhat consistent message, this obstacle must be met. The majority of academic research demonstrates that, particularly in the social media age, national values, traditions, and brands are most trustworthy when they are supported by well-known people, organizations, and everyday people. Lessons learned from similar situations point to the need for the government to encourage rather than strictly impose private actors' behavior (Hill & Beadle, 2014).

Who will hear the UAE message and how it will be delivered must both be carefully considered. Advocates of soft power must remember that effective public diplomacy is a two-way process. Both speaking and listening are required. When public diplomacy interacts with its target audience rather than merely broadcasting to them, it is more effective. The Soft Power Council of the UAE also needs to be aware of how drastically dissimilar global standards of what is desirable, appealing, or acceptable are. To put it another way, something that boosts soft power in one nation or region could have the exact opposite effect in another (Hill & Beadle, 2014).

Soft power costs money as well. The majority of the UAE soft power projects, like its global philanthropic programs, investments in the travel and tourism sector, aviation, and infrastructure, among others, demand substantial sums of money and are challenging to maintain over time. Soft power requires substantial political and financial resources and is a long-term commitment. Third, support at home is necessary for an effective soft power effort abroad. Countries cannot presume that their extravagant attempts to impress guests would be adored or valued at home.

Fourth, the UAE is vulnerable to unconstrained reports that could damage its reputation because it lacks access to such a weapon. Although the media has developed into the ultimate

global tool of power and influence for nations and the people who own and manage it, the UAE lacks such a tool. Along with regional rivals like Qatar, the US and Europe have strong international media outlets that aren't always fair to the UAE.

Fifth, due to negative international media coverage and the humanitarian situation in Yemen, the use of strong force, such as the war there, may increase and harm the UAE reputation. Sixth, while it is admirable, the UAE could face accusations of cultural appropriation and a lack of cultural authenticity if it adopts western cultural undertakings like the Guggenheim Museum and Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Because the idea of soft power is constantly changing, researchers and academics would be advised to conduct extensive research in order to identify more effective soft power strategies. The study also revealed that a variety of public and private players are exposed to soft power resources. It is not just up to the government to strengthen UAE soft power; the business sector may also contribute considerably.

To establish standardized soft power plans at the state level, the paper recommends creating a direct online platform for the government where public opinions may be gathered and incorporated into soft power activities. This will be really helpful in terms of inclusion and openness issues. The Federal National Council, a model for long-term federal government institutions, with some members being appointed and some being elected, is suggested in the report as a replacement for the UAE Soft Power Council. The new body must be tasked with developing a comprehensive soft power strategy for the UAE that respects regional soft power norms as well as local traditions and practices[51].

The study's overall conclusion, however, indicates that the UAE needed a lot of help from outside sources to adjust to changes in international relations. On the other side, the

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[51] Globally recognized principles and strategies nations use to exert influence internationally through non-coercive means like culture, diplomacy, and policy. Specific cultural and historical practices unique to a region or country, like the UAE, are integral to shaping its unique approach to soft power and international relations.

country's dynamics have caused it to rank as one of the biggest international aid donors. A close inspection of the nation reveals that it is primarily "targeted." Those chosen to receive the most help is chosen because they are in the most need. This shows that in terms of international relations, foreign aid can serve as an influence tool. The chapter's primary addition to the body of knowledge on the evolution of international relations is the expansion of this research question through the presentation of a fresh scientific analysis that highlights the UAE flexibility in responding to particular external circumstances. The majority of international help is now given by the UAE.

The most widespread method used today is to grade a country's public diplomacy based on how successfully its relations with other nations have evolved. This method links the results of public diplomacy with soft power. Instead of, as Joseph Nye suggested, turning current soft power resources into even more soft power, this chapter argues that the primary purpose of public diplomacy is to transform a country's assets into soft power resources that appeal to the target country. To put it another way, the success of a public diplomacy initiative depends on whether or not it alters or improves the public's perception of the nation that is carrying it out.

One illustrative case study highlighting the UAE effective use of soft power is its significant investment in the cultural sector, notably the establishment of globally recognized institutions such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and the planned Guggenheim Museum. These cultural landmarks showcase the UAE commitment to global arts and culture and serve as a bridge between Eastern and Western cultures. However, this cultural strategy has faced challenges, particularly accusations of cultural appropriation and debates over authenticity. Despite these criticisms, the UAE has strategically managed these cultural initiatives to reflect global artistic standards and local heritage, enhancing its international image and soft power. These cultural endeavors have positioned the UAE as a global cultural hub, attracting tourists

and art enthusiasts worldwide, and have been instrumental in reshaping perceptions of the Arab world in the international arena.

Another significant case study is the UAE humanitarian efforts, particularly in response to crises in Yemen and other regions. The UAE foreign aid approach, especially its substantial contributions to Yemen, demonstrates its commitment to addressing regional humanitarian challenges. This approach has provided critical assistance to affected populations and enhanced the UAE diplomatic relations and global standing. The UAE reinforces its image as a compassionate and responsible global actor by focusing on humanitarian aid. However, this strategy has also faced challenges, including criticism regarding the broader geopolitical implications of its involvement in Yemen. Despite these complexities, the UAE humanitarian efforts remain a crucial aspect of its soft power strategy, showcasing its ability to balance national interests with international responsibilities.

From the author's perspective, the UAE strategic investment in cultural and humanitarian initiatives exemplifies a nuanced approach to leveraging soft power in international relations. The establishment of cultural institutions like the Louvre Abu Dhabi, despite facing challenges of cultural appropriation, signifies a bold step in bridging global cultural divides and showcases the UAE commitment to being a cross-cultural mediator. Similarly, the UAE humanitarian aid, particularly in Yemen, highlights its role as a responsible international actor, balancing regional interests with global humanitarian commitments. These actions reflect a sophisticated understanding of soft power – not just as a tool for national promotion but as a means of genuinely contributing to global cultural and humanitarian landscapes. The UAE approach, combining cultural diplomacy with humanitarian efforts, demonstrates an innovative strategy in soft power, aligning national interests with global responsibilities and challenges, ultimately enhancing its international stature and influence.

CHAPTER FOUR

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT OF THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ON SOFT POWER AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN UAE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter develops the theoretical framework by following the literature pieces of evidence. In this regard, the study develops the research hypotheses of how public diplomacy of the UAE affects soft power and international relations where media and communication strengthen these relationships.

One notable case study is the UAE Space Program, particularly the Mars Mission (Hope Probe). The mission was groundbreaking for the UAE and communicated effectively through a well-coordinated media campaign. This strategic communication effort garnered global attention and admiration, positioning the UAE as a region's space technology leader. The successful launch and media coverage displayed the UAE's technological capabilities and commitment to scientific advancement. The international media coverage of the Hope Probe fostered a sense of national pride and significantly boosted the UAE image as an innovative and forward-thinking nation. This, in turn, enhanced its soft power by portraying the UAE as a key player in global scientific endeavours, positively affecting its international relations and diplomatic standing.

The foundation of modern diplomatic practice is the complex combination of soft power strategy and public diplomacy, especially as countries want to rise globally without using force. This investigation, which has its roots in the UAE, aims to shed light on how the country's skillful application of public diplomacy has considerably strengthened its soft power strategy, consequently influencing its reputation and stature globally (Clark, 2016). With the emergence of digital media and globalization, public diplomacy once considered a country's way of interacting with and influencing the public to accomplish its foreign policy goals has undergone a significant transformation. This progression is best illustrated by the UAE public diplomacy strategy, which combines cultural diplomacy, foreign aid, and global leadership projects in a calculated manner. The UAE has portrayed itself as a progressive, transparent,

and robust global participant by promoting cultural exchanges, offering humanitarian help, and initiating international discussions on essential problems. This aligns with the soft power approach, which favors attraction and co-optation over coercion (Nye Jr., 2008). The UAE's dedication to strengthening its soft power is demonstrated by its investments in prestigious cultural establishments like the Louvre Abu Dhabi and its active participation in international humanitarian relief and peacekeeping missions. These programs demonstrate the UAE's commitment to global collaboration, humanitarian help, and cultural diversity three pillars of its soft power strategy in addition to its riches and technical prowess.

Furthermore, the UAE's response to the COVID-19 epidemic demonstrated its prowess in crisis management and innovative healthcare (Krishnan et al., 2023). The prompt and efficient reaction, marked by state-of-the-art medical facilities and a widespread immunization program, was acknowledged globally. This demonstrated the UAE commitment to global health and safety, strengthening its reputation as a capable and responsible country and emphasizing its soft power. The UAE strategic utilization of communication and media has enhanced its soft power. Through the strategic utilization of digital platforms and foreign press, the UAE has successfully disseminated its accomplishments and objectives to a worldwide audience. This has improved its position abroad while promoting a deeper awareness and respect of its principles and culture. The media's crucial role in balancing soft power and public diplomacy has allowed the UAE to tell stories that connect with people worldwide.

Soft power and public diplomacy have a nuanced and intricate interaction. The UAE interacts with the world through public diplomacy; soft power is shaped by the country's capacity to draw in and appropriate outside attention (Alhamar, 2023). The UAE has fortified its international contacts and established itself as a significant actor in world events because of the efficient interaction between these two elements. Moreover, the diplomatic tactics employed by the UAE, such as its emphasis on global leadership, international collaboration,

and the provision of economic help, indicate its broader soft power strategy. These programs are calculated attempts to raise the UAE profile and influence internationally, not just acts of kindness. Through soft power concepts in its foreign policy, the UAE has established more robust international connections founded on mutual respect, appreciation, and advantages. It is impossible to overestimate the moderating power of communication and the media. In the digital era, a nation's soft power may be significantly impacted by public diplomacy projects and how they are portrayed to the outside world. The UAE has deftly negotiated this terrain, leveraging media to promote its accomplishments, culture, and values to a worldwide audience, thus amplifying its soft power (McGiffert, 2009).

Public diplomacy significantly and complexly influences the UAE soft power strategy. The UAE has improved its soft power and, by extension, its foreign relations by taking strategic steps in the areas of culture, humanitarian aid, and global leadership, as well as efficient use of the media and communication channels (Krzymowski, 2020). This strategy emphasizes the value of soft power in today's linked world and presents the UAE as a role model for other countries hoping to gain international recognition by influence and diplomacy rather than force. The interaction of soft power and public diplomacy continues to be a crucial component of the UAE foreign policy as it builds on its achievements, highlighting the country's distinctive modernity and tradition and its dedication to taking on a positive role in the world.

This case study demonstrates the integral role of media and communication in amplifying the UAE soft power and reinforcing its international relations. By effectively leveraging media channels to showcase its achievements and cultural values, the UAE has influenced international perceptions and created lasting partnerships, underlining the power of media and communication in public diplomacy and international relations.

4.2   Development of Hypotheses

4.2.1   Impact of Public Diplomacy on Soft Power in UAE Context

The UAE has strengthened its position as a center of cultural excellence in the region and possibly the entire world as indicated by the development of its society and strategy (Cornelia, 2017). To do this, the UAE has spent the last few years putting its resources and efforts into building a cultural foundation across a range of industries (Saberi, et al., 2018b). Along with the museums, which serve as contemporary manifestations of concerns facing human civilization, the city is also home to more than 200 nations of various racial groups, religious groups, and sects (Karasik, 2021). As a result of the Emirati people's transformation of the global public's perception of the UAE into the region's distinctive cultural face, the UAE has now gained regional cultural significance.

According to Saad (2020), the UAE has achieved this during the previous stages of consolidating its position in resolving humanitarian and societal issues provides it with the elements of superiority. Cultural diversity and intergroup coexistence are the basis of the state's societal structure, not a transient political project. In comparison to other nations, the UAE is attempting to move on the same path gradually after working to win over the world's trust. In order to unite people and embrace global culture in the face of threats to the stability of human societies, Karasik (2021) studied. Kourgiotis (2020) has highlighted humanitarian concerns as a crucial component of UAE diplomacy (Suwaidi, 2017). The state holds prominent positions within international organizations and participates in their decision-making processes. The human component must be present when forging coalitions in the worlds of money and politics, especially now that the scope of international connections has increased (Cornelia, 2017). Pope Francis and Al-Azhar Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb signed the "Human Fraternity" agreement in Abu Dhabi in 2018 and the Abrahamic Agreement in 2020. According to research by Karasik

(2021), the agreement has allowed the UAE to participate in two international humanitarian events that display its stature and influence on the world stage.

A case study highlighting the effective use of media and communication in strengthening the relationship between soft power and international relations for the UAE is its approach to managing the COVID-19 pandemic. The UAE response to the pandemic, characterized by swift action, advanced healthcare facilities, and widespread vaccination campaigns, received significant international media coverage. The government's transparent communication strategy via digital platforms, including social media, was crucial in disseminating information about their health initiatives and safety measures. This approach helped manage the crisis effectively within the country and projected an image of the UAE as a capable, responsible, and technologically advanced nation. The global recognition of the UAE efficient handling of the pandemic, amplified through the media, significantly enhanced its soft power by positioning it as a leader in crisis management and healthcare innovation.

Furthermore, the UAE diplomatic efforts during the pandemic, including providing medical aid and support to other countries, were strategically communicated to international audiences. These actions, widely covered by the global media, underscored the UAE commitment to international cooperation and solidarity in times of crisis. By leveraging the media to highlight these humanitarian efforts, the UAE strengthened its international relations and reputation as a benevolent global player. This case illustrates the critical role of media and communication in enhancing the UAE soft power, displaying its ability to address domestic challenges and contribute positively to global issues.

In general, the UAE experience is a paradigm of economic diversity and human coexistence and is particularly significant in studies of holistic development and economic rebirth. As well, Saad (2020) asserts that because this experience reveals concepts that may be challenging to other individuals, its significance is growing throughout the Middle East. Since

its inception, the Emirati culture has been built with an emphasis on the human individual because it is he who possesses the true wealth. The UAE summarized this viewpoint in the signing of the "Human Brotherhood" document for the two major world faiths, which expanded it by Karasik (2021) to encompass humanity in the entire planet.

Public diplomacy is a tactic used by governments to engage and converse with global audiences to promote their country and increase their soft power (Nye Jr., 2008; Clarke, 2016; Huijgh, 2016). The ability of a nation to influence the preferences of others primarily through cultural, political, and social factors is known as soft power, a phrase Nye created in 2019 (Nye, 2019). The language and rhetoric of soft power, according to Hayden (2012), are essential in the global environment. Hocking (2005) and Melissen (2005) share this viewpoint and contend that public diplomacy has changed from conventional to new diplomacy, placing a significant focus on communication and information exchange. Public diplomacy acts as a bridge in this regard, uniting internal and exterior publics through common ideals and values.

Numerous studies have looked at the relationship between soft power and public diplomacy in various nations. Turkish soft power has increased and decreased throughout time, as studied by Ekşi & Erol (2018), who attribute shifts to public diplomacy. Al Suwaidi (2021), Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi (2022), and Saberi et al. (2018) have done similar research on the subject. These works examine the function of public diplomacy in the rise of the UAE as a major soft power. Melissen (2011) describes how nations in East Asia employ public diplomacy to increase their soft power. According to this research, successful public diplomacy can improve a country's reputation, image, and eventually soft power (Wang, 2006). According to Atkinson (2014) and Lee (2015), respectively, public diplomacy has a place in both the military and the educational system. Military education hubs and exchanges can be used as soft power instruments to increase a country's influence on the world stage. However, Pamment (2016) and Mogensen (2017) examine the relationship between public diplomacy and

development, arguing that if used wisely, development aid may be a powerful tool of soft power. Based on the literature pieces of studies, the study proposes the research hypotheses:

H1. There is a significant relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and soft power (governance, people and values, media, communication) based on the UAE citizens' view

H1.1. There is a significant relationship between foreign policy and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

H1.2. There is a significant relationship between international cooperation and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

H1.3. There is a significant relationship between leadership and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

H1.4. There is a significant relationship between economic aid and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view

Following are the case studies related to hypotheses respectively.

A pertinent case study in this context is the UAE diplomatic approach towards Southeast Asian countries, particularly its strengthened ties with Indonesia. This relationship, marked by high-level visits and the signing of numerous agreements, demonstrates the UAE strategic foreign policy aiming to enhance economic and cultural links. The UAE investment in Indonesia's infrastructure and renewable energy sector signifies a blend of foreign policy with soft power dimensions. Measuring UAE citizens' views on this partnership through surveys or social media analysis can provide insights into how such foreign policy initiatives are perceived domestically and their impact on the UAE global image.

An example is the UAE active participation in the United Nations' initiatives, especially in peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. The UAE contribution to UN peacekeeping missions illustrates its commitment to global stability and security. This international cooperation reinforces the UAE role as a responsible global actor and enhances its soft power by aligning with global values of peace and humanitarianism. Surveys of UAE citizens regarding their perceptions of the UAE UN involvement can offer valuable data on the impact of these actions on national soft power.

The UAE annual leadership in hosting and organizing the World Government Summit is a critical case study. This event, which brings together leaders, policymakers, and thinkers from around the globe, positions the UAE as a hub for global dialogue and innovation. The citizens' views on the UAE role in hosting this high-profile event can be assessed to gauge the impact of such leadership on the nation's soft power and international reputation.

The UAE aid in response to natural disasters, such as assisting Nepal following the 2015 earthquake, is a significant example. This aid provided much-needed relief and improved the UAE international standing. Public opinion within the UAE regarding such humanitarian efforts and their effectiveness in enhancing the country's global image can be quantified through surveys and media analysis, offering insights into the link between economic aid and soft power. These case studies provide a comprehensive view of how different aspects of the UAE public diplomacy are perceived domestically and internationally and how they contribute to its soft power.

4.2.2 Moderating effect of media and communication in UAE Context

A complex yet crucial triangle is formed when public diplomacy, soft power, and media and communication interact to shape international relations. As stated in the research hypothesis, this literature review will investigate these features with an emphasis on the viewpoints of the people of the UAE. Instigating international cooperation, leadership, and

financial assistance, public diplomacy is an essential component of a country's foreign policy (Nye Jr., 2008). To establish a supportive environment for the country's foreign policy, it plays a crucial role in image-building by working to change the opinions of the foreign public (Melissen, 2005). Studies by Al Suwaidi (2021) and Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi (2022) in-depth analyzed the UAE public diplomacy activities with an emphasis on the nation's rising soft power status.

Soft power depends on elements like government, a nation's people, and its values (Nye, 2019). Soft power is described as the capacity to influence others' choices through appeal and attractiveness. In 2019, Zaabi & Awamleh identified several soft power factors in the UAE, including the nation's government, culture, and values. In their study on the tourist and film sectors in the UAE, Saberi et al. (2018) give specific examples of this, demonstrating the nation's effective use of cultural products to strengthen its soft power. Media and communication must play a moderating role in the interaction between public diplomacy and soft power. The effect of public diplomacy initiatives on a country's soft power can be amplified or diminished by media and communication methods (Hayden, 2012; Clarke, 2016). Cherkaoui (2018), who also emphasizes the significance of media in defining public diplomacy initiatives and affecting soft power, discusses the impact of Qatar's foreign broadcasting on its public diplomacy during the Gulf Crisis.

In the UAE, the media is viewed as a weapon to advance friendly connections abroad, improve the nation's stature, and influence (Zaabi & Awamleh, 2019). The perspective of UAE inhabitants toward these initiatives, however, has received little attention. Their opinions can offer insightful information about the success of public diplomacy initiatives, the soft power of the country, and the function of the media in this situation. Pamment's (2016) research, which examines the relationship between public diplomacy, soft power, and development,

offers a pertinent viewpoint. It contends that openness and communication can increase the effectiveness of public diplomacy on soft power. Finally, the study offers a research hypothesis:

H2. There is a moderating effect of media and communication on the relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and soft power (governance and people & value) based on the UAE citizens' view

4.2.3 Impact of Public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) on international relation in UAE context

Academic literature increasingly acknowledges how public diplomacy, particularly concerning foreign policy, global cooperation, leadership, and economic help, shapes international relations. Following the research hypotheses, this review will examine these elements using the perspectives of UAE inhabitants. In the creation and execution of foreign policy, public diplomacy is crucial. It promotes international collaboration, facilitates the negotiation of international treaties, and helps resolve disputes (Melissen, 2005; Nye Jr, 2008). Al Suwaidi (2021) explores the relationship between public diplomacy and foreign policy in the context of the UAE and makes the argument that successful foreign policy implementation profoundly affects international relations.

The focus of the study is the connection between international relations and foreign policy. According to Ekşi & Erol's (2018) analysis, there is a considerable association between Turkish foreign policy and its international relations. It is important to investigate how this relationship appears in the UAE setting, especially from the viewpoint of UAE inhabitants. The influence of international cooperation on international relations is looked at in this study. The work of Melissen (2011) emphasizes the value of international collaboration by showing that it is an essential component of public diplomacy and has a big influence on world affairs. Understanding how the UAE inhabitants view international cooperation and how it affects their nation's foreign relations is crucial. The study also investigates the link between international

relations and leadership. Nye (2023) focuses on the significance of successful leadership in the use of both hard and soft power. From the perspective of its population, the UAE has significantly improved its worldwide presence under its strong leadership (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022), which may be indicative of a favorable correlation between leadership and foreign relations.

The studies also discuss how international relations and economic aid are related. Pamment (2016) contends that economic assistance can affect international relations when used strategically as an instrument of public diplomacy. The viewpoint of the UAE residents on this issue could offer important insights into the connection between economic help and foreign relations for the country, which is a prominent provider of economic aid. Finally, the study offers the research hypotheses:

H3. There is a significant relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

H3.1 There is a significant relationship between foreign policy and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

H3.2 there is a significant relationship between international cooperation and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

H3.3 There is a significant relationship between leadership and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

H3.4 There is a significant relationship between economic aid and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view

4.2.4   Mediating role of soft power on international relations in UAE Context

The growth of new players in international relations, such as non-governmental organizations in the UAE, as well as the urgent need to dispel misconceptions about the value of establishing direct contacts with other countries and the factors influencing them that are pervasive in public opinion (Mohajan, 2018). Soft power, a concept frequently discussed in international relations, has gained substantial attention and relevance, particularly in the UAE. This concept, as defined by Droz-Vincent (2020), refers to the ability to shape the preferences and needs of individuals or nations through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or force. In essence, soft power is about influencing others subtly and indirectly, leveraging cultural appeal, political values, or economic incentives rather than exerting direct pressure or using overt force. A prime example of the UAE application of soft power is its investment in global cultural initiatives, such as the establishment of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. This museum is not just a center for art; it represents a bridge between Eastern and Western cultures, displaying the UAE commitment to cultural exchange and global dialogue. The UAE attracts international admiration and fosters a positive image, influencing global perceptions without force or economic leverage. This approach inculcates a sense of respect and admiration for the UAE culture and values, enhancing its influence on the international stage. The most crucial step in using soft power to advance the objectives of the first party, according to Kourgiotis (2020), is to influence the other parties' priorities and preferences in order to align their goals with the first parties. This is made possible by the success of the UAE soft power and what it stands for as a model for other nations seeking to forge international ties.

According to Droz-Vincent (2020), there is a lot of misunderstanding regarding the notion of soft power and other strategies that are equally significant, and many analysts believe that lethal or non-lethal force is equivalent to soft power. For instance, the media or information power of the UAE is a soft power that influences the adversary's policies, but the media may

also be a coercive force in situations involving hostile rumors or defamatory exposure. In the UAE, public diplomacy is a notion that goes beyond traditional diplomacy, propaganda, the outside media, and official information and information agencies (Tago, 2017). Given that public diplomacy involves a diverse variety of societal sectors while government diplomacy is constrained by conventions, walls, and formal relationships (Ibish, 2017). While interconnected, public and government diplomacy operates in distinct realms with unique approaches to international relations. Public diplomacy encompasses a broad spectrum of societal sectors and engages directly with foreign publics, transcending the formal constraints typical of traditional government diplomacy. It utilizes cultural exchanges, educational programs, media engagement, and digital platforms to foster mutual understanding and goodwill among nations. On the other hand, government diplomacy operates within the formal boundaries of state-to-state interactions, characterized by official protocols, negotiations, and agreements. The relationship between these two forms of diplomacy is symbiotic; public diplomacy complements and enhances traditional diplomatic efforts by building a supportive public opinion and cultural milieu, which can make government diplomacy more effective. By engaging with a broader audience beyond official channels, public diplomacy creates an environment conducive to positive international relations, thus indirectly supporting the objectives of government diplomacy. Professors, scholars, media experts, businesspeople, and activists in the sectors of women's, youth, social, legal, environmental, sporting (Rookwood, 2019), artistic, and cultural issues are a few examples. And together, they make up a consistent and powerful team for these soft power and unconventional diplomacy initiatives. To open the doors that have been closed for others while winning the war of ideas, values, images, policies, and impressions. Access to the joints that move societies and their populations.

Perhaps this new diplomacy is a result of the growth of diplomatic ideas and international relations, and its significance emerged over the past 20 years as the UAE realized

the extent of their need to enhance their reputation globally and persuade the outside public of their values, accomplishments, and the "nobility" of their policies (Al Suwaidi, 2021). It has aided in the advancement of this kind of diplomacy, the dissemination of democratic and transparent values, and the emergence of the communication and information revolutions. There are a lot of depressing role models in the UAE who disregard the idea of popular culture public diplomacy (Krzyzaniak, 2018). Seven Emirates have aspirations and the financial resources, but because they lack unorthodox public diplomacy, their results are dismal, and their aspirations become rootedness. Some performers express "anger or dissatisfaction" about an ally's official policies in their traditional diplomacy, but they are unable to transfer this emotion into cultural and public diplomacy. The saying of anger is an invitation to discussion and dialogue regarding the soft power of the UAE, but according to Abdi (2019), it is influencing the public view of the societies. When propaganda is avoided, popular cultural public diplomacy of the UAE is successful.

For instance, the BBC has been successful in communicating Middle Eastern ideals and policies to the rest of the globe in a way that is more powerful and persuasive than conventional government diplomacy (Al-Rawi, 2021). On the other hand, the late founding leader Sheikh Zayed effectively, convincingly, and advantageously represented the Emirates to the world, and his foreign policy created a favorable impression and a positive image of the nation and society (Krzyzaniak, 2018). With his desire to create cooperative societies, Sheikh Zayed also demonstrated indeed his communication with the mood and requirements of the outside world. As a result, the UAE gained a reputation as a nation that promotes stability, peace, and benefits people and the environment.

According to Gura, et al., (2018) In UAE decision-making circles, the public diplomacy vision is still stable. Thus, it is crucial to launch a popular cultural public diplomacy that reaches out to civic societies and the general public (Billard, & Moran, 2020). The UAE government

hopes to win over people's hearts and minds by creating a platform for understanding, creating connections with other people, and making friends (Gokalp, 2020). In order to develop a permanent force for public diplomacy campaigns, an independent council focused on foreign relations must be established. This council must also train teams from various societal sectors. Public diplomacy is actively participating in current transformations, the advantages of globalization, and developments like soft power while also providing the UAE public with technological, human, and material capabilities. Traditional diplomacy, on the other hand, does not pretend to be public diplomacy. In the subject of international studies, the idea of soft power playing the role of a mediating factor in the link between public diplomacy and international relations is crucial. These connections will be investigated in this review of the literature, with an emphasis on UAE residents' perspectives. According to Nye Jr. (2008), soft power is a country's capacity to influence others' preferences through allure and attractiveness, based on things like culture, political beliefs, and foreign policies. Numerous studies (Nye, 2019; Hayden, 2012) have suggested that soft power may operate as a mediation factor between public diplomacy and international relations.

The concept of public diplomacy within the UAE, as emphasized by Gura et al. (2018), has been consistently integrated into the nation's strategic framework, particularly emphasizing the need to connect with global civil society and the wider public. This approach underlines the importance of extending diplomatic efforts beyond governmental corridors, focusing on cultivating cultural and social ties that resonate with people across the globe. The UAE strategy involves leveraging its rich cultural heritage, progressive achievements, and innovative vision to build bridges of understanding and friendship. By organizing cultural festivals, supporting international art forums, and participating in global dialogues on critical issues, the UAE aims to create a narrative that is engaging and relatable to a diverse global audience. These initiatives

are designed to display the UAE cultural richness and foster a sense of shared values and mutual respect.

Billard and Moran (2020) underscore the critical role of such cultural public diplomacy in winning the hearts and minds of people worldwide. The UAE government's approach to crafting relatable and engaging cultural narratives aims to build long-term relationships based on mutual understanding and respect. This strategy is complemented by Gokalp's (2020) observation of the UAE efforts to establish platforms for dialogue and exchange, whether through educational programs, humanitarian aid, or cultural partnerships. These initiatives elevate the UAE global image and cultivate a network of global goodwill and friendships. This form of diplomacy, transcending traditional state-to-state interactions, enables the UAE to position itself as a culturally rich and globally connected nation, enhancing its influence and presence on the international stage.

Foreign policy, global cooperation, leadership, and economic assistance are all included in public diplomacy (Melissen, 2005). These are instruments for enhancing a country's image and building solid international ties. An in-depth comprehension of these elements in the context of the UAE is provided by studies by Al Suwaidi (2021) and Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi (2022). The UAE foreign policy, which is significantly influenced by its leadership, emphasizes international collaboration and large economic aid, placing it as a major participant on the international scene (Antwi-Boateng & Alhashmi, 2022). These public diplomacy components help the country's soft power, as seen by its popularity and influence on a worldwide scale. In contrast, soft power has a big impact on how international relations are shaped. International opinion can be swayed, and good ties can be fostered through a nation's attractive culture, political principles, and policies (Nye, 2019; Zaabi & Awamleh, 2019). Saberi et al. (2018), who use the tourism and film sectors of the UAE to demonstrate their soft power, further emphasize this notion. Finally, the study develops a research hypothesis:

H4. There is a mediating effect of soft power on the relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and international relations based on the UAE citizens' view

After developing the research hypotheses, we develop a conceptual model in Figure 1.2.
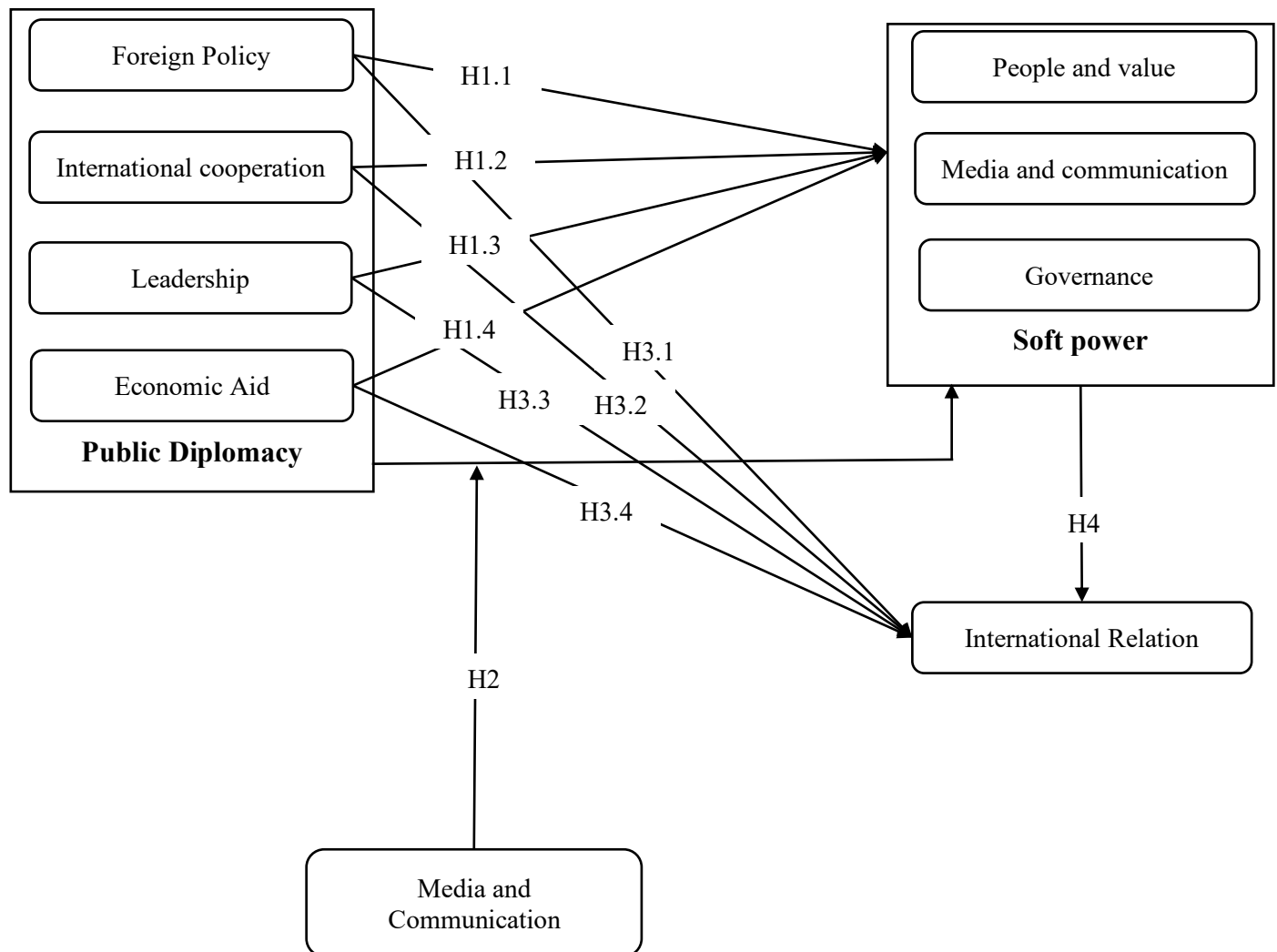
Figure 1.2: Conceptual framework (Researcher)

4.3   Chapter Summary

This chapter develops the theoretical framework by developing the research hypotheses. The impact of public diplomacy on Soft Power has been highlighted in this chapter, however state of the art studies and resources have been utilized in order to conduct and

extensive investigation. Power in the era of global information will, more than ever before, comprise both the soft dimensions of attractiveness and the hard features of compulsion and incentive. This is because power is not absolute. The most important findings from the study that was presented indicate that institutional and personal responsibility for international relations, humanitarian assistance, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been merged in the UAE. This demonstrates the UAE dependence on and value for assistance from other countries. The UAE international assistance has helped support the United Nations' 10 Sustainable Development Goals. According to the figures that were gathered, the UAE has spent 84 percent of its budget for international assistance since 2016. Out of the total expenditure of USD 22.89 billion made in support of the 10 SDGs. 67 percent of it was distributed to the nations with the lowest incomes and the fewest resources. This ODA-DAC group was responsible for seventy-five percent of the entire eight million dollars that had been invested in 2019. However, the findings of the research as a whole reveal that receiving help from other countries was a crucial component in the UAE ability to adjust to changes in the nature of international relations. On the other hand, as a result of its internal dynamics, it has become one of the major givers of international assistance in the world.

A comprehensive examination of the nation reveals that this is, to a significant extent, "targeted." The degree to which an individual or group is in desperate need determines the size of the quantity of assistance that will be provided to them. This is evidence that indicates how help to other countries may be used as a tool of influence in the context of international relations. The key addition that the offered study makes to studies on the development of foreign relations is the enhancement of this research field via the provision of a fresh scientific analysis that demonstrates how the UAE has adjusted to the unique situation in the external environment. The UAE has surpassed all other countries as the largest giver of help abroad. There are several situations in which the armed forces are in a position to play a substantial

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role in the expansion of the nation's soft power. In addition to the sense of superiority bestowed upon it as a result of its hard power capabilities. During times of peace, the military participates in a wide variety of activities with other nations, including officer exchanges, joint training, and aid initiatives. The risks associated with having the military play a role in public diplomacy become apparent whenever there is an attempt to use strategies from times of war in precarious circumstances. This is especially enticing in the present ill-defined war on terrorism, which blurs the boundary between regular civilian operations and conventional war. This conflict also makes no distinction between normal civilian occupations and traditional war. These kinds of efforts, in the end, do not result in the creation of soft power; rather, they undermine it.

Building connections that last a lifetime does not necessarily result in financial gain in the near run. Consequently, leaving it only up to the market might result in insufficient investment (Wu, 2017). Despite the fact that a college degree could pay for itself, charitable organizations might be of assistance. Without financial backing from the government, many exchange programs would be reduced. In order to remain profitable, private companies are required to adapt their strategies to the dynamics of the market. In the same vein, contemporary audiences are often wary of those in positions of power, and administrations are frequently viewed with skepticism. As a result, it is often in the best interest of governments to remain in the background and collaborate with private players. Even though they are difficult to monitor and sometimes even less trustworthy than administrations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may be very helpful interaction outlets. After the conclusion of the cold war, American corporations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played major roles in the development of democracy in Eastern Europe. In a similar vein, nations such as Britain and the United States, which both have sizable immigrant populations, may benefit from the culturally responsive and linguistically proficient links that can be provided by such migrant communities. Germany was a pioneer in the process of establishing partnerships between

political parties in other nations. In Germany, the main parties each have foundations for international contacts, which are partially funded by funding provided by the German government. The United States of America followed suit during management of Ronald Reagan by establishing the National Endowment for Democracy. This endowment secured assistance for the National Democratic Research center and the United Nations Republican Academy, in addition to organized labor and business associations, with the goal of promoting democracy and society organizations in other countries.

Despite this, it has been able to establish a voice and presence that are disproportionate to its small size and limited resources by ruthlessly prioritizing its target consumers and focusing on a single message. The role of peacekeeping power in the globe. The operations that are relevant include conflict negotiation in the Middle East, Sri Lanka, and Colombia. Additionally, the country has a sizable assistance budget and is often involved in humanitarian missions. It goes without saying that not all measures and same message. The internal politics of whaling might occasionally strike a responsive chord among environmentalism, but generally, a tiny nation utilize a diplomatically specialty that boosts its image and influence in the world.

The proportion of direct government records to long-term cultural contacts varies according to each of public diplomacy's three aspects; yet the importance of all three cannot be overstated. The everyday communications aspect is the first and most direct of the three dimensions (D'Angelo, 2002). It entails providing an explanation of the domestic and international context of policy choices. After choices have been made, government officials in contemporary democracies often dedicate a significant amount of energy to determining what to say to the press and how to say it. However, the international press is often their primary emphasis. When it comes to the beginning stage of political communication, a key goal should be the international press. In the first level, there must also be planning for responding to

emergency situations. Because of our capacity for quick reaction, we are able to provide an instant response to any misleading information or false accusations.

The second aspect is strategic information, which is characterized by the development of a series of simple themes in a manner quite similar to that of a political or commercial campaign. The campaign intends to carry out symbolic places and make broader vision during the course of the next year in order to either reinforce central concepts or advocate a specific government agenda. Particular policy measures are the focal point of the special topics. Developing connections that will stand the test of time is the third component of public communication. Japan has devised an innovative exchange program that invites young people from forty different nations to teach their languages in Japanese schools each year. The program also includes an alumni club to sustain the links of goodwill that are formed as a result of the program. Each of these three aspects of public communication plays a significant part in helping to establish an appealing image of a nation, which may enhance the chances of that country achieving the results it seeks. However, even the most effective advertising won't help sell a product that nobody wants. It is more probable that such policies would inhibit rather than enhance soft power if they give the impression of being excessively self-serving or condescendingly portrayed. Friendships that have been maintained over a long period of time may, at most, cause others to respond with a modicum of increased tolerance. There are times when your friends will be more inclined to forgive you or give you the false hope. This is what is meant when we talk about a policy environment being either enabling or hindering.

The art of public diplomacy is a two-way street that requires both speaking and listening in order to be successful. It is necessary for us to have a deeper understanding of what is going on in the thoughts of others and what ideals we have in common with them. Because of this, interactions are often more successful than just disseminating information. Getting other people to seek the same results as you do is the essence of what is meant by the term "soft power."

And this necessitates having an awareness of the manner in which people are receiving your messages and modifying them appropriately. It is of the utmost importance to comprehend the intended audience. However, funding for research on public opinion in other countries is chronically inadequate. It is not the most effective method to convert non-Christians to preach at them. Too often, current politicians have the misconception that the issue is only that their constituents are ignorant of the facts. And that if they were only aware of what we are, they would still see things from our point of view. However, all material is filtered via many cultural lenses (Fattah, 2001) and proclamatory utterances are almost never heard in the way they were designed. Telling is far less influential than showing, particularly via behaviors and emblems that both show and inform. Because of this, the measures that the American government had planned to increase economic assistance or to battle HIV/AIDS had the opportunity to be significant before they were buried by the weight of Iraq.

Media and communication are necessary, but it must be complemented by efficient narrowcasting done via the Internet and some other channels. In many regions of the globe, where the majority of people live in poverty and cannot afford to purchase a telephone, the Internet is only accessible to the upper classes. Because of its adaptability and cheap cost, it enables messages to be directed at specific groups of people. In addition to this, it enables the flow of information to nations in which the government restricts access to conventional media (Billard, & Moran, 2020). In addition, it is possible to engage in interactive activities and conversations while using the internet. Some nations are able to carry out almost all of their public diplomacy activities, including broadcasting, via their acts. It has a population of barely 5 million people and does not have a culture or language that is shared internationally. It is not a member of the European Union and does not serve as the headquarters or hub of any organizations or multi-national corporations.

In short, in the UAE, the media has evolved significantly, playing a crucial role in supporting national development and promoting the country's image globally. UAE media outlets, guided by strategic frameworks and regulatory standards, contribute to shaping public opinion while aligning with national values and priorities. The country has invested heavily in digital and traditional media platforms, using them as tools of soft power to share its achievements, culture, and vision for the future. Freedom of speech in the UAE is practiced within a framework of governance that emphasizes responsibility, respect, and social stability. This approach allows for the expression of diverse views, provided they do not incite hate, threaten public order, or undermine national unity. As such, the UAE continues to foster a balanced media environment that encourages dialogue and innovation while upholding the principles of harmony and national interest.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY TO TEST SOFT POWER, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND MEDIA & COMMUNICATION WITH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN UAE

5.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research design and the methods employed to gather and analyse data. This chapter will elucidate the research philosophy, approach, strategy, data collection and analysis methods, ethical considerations, and limitations to provide an in-depth understanding of the process followed in this study. This section will discuss the philosophical stance underpinning the research, whether it be positivism, interpretivism, realism, or pragmatism. The chosen philosophy will guide the approach to knowledge creation in this study and influence the methodology selection. This will address whether the research adopted a deductive approach (theory testing) or an inductive one (theory building) and justify the chosen approach. The research design section will elaborate on the overall structure of the research, discussing the choice between exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory design, and rationalizing the chosen design. This section will delve into the research strategy employed - whether the study used a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods strategy. It will also explain the choice of specific methods such as surveys, case studies, experiments, etc. The data collection section will explain the process of gathering data, including the source of data, the data collection instruments used (e.g., questionnaires, interviews), the sampling strategy, and the procedure followed. This part will describe how the collected data will be processed and analysed. It will detail the statistical or analytical tools, software, and techniques used to interpret and make sense of the data.

This section will address the ethical considerations adhered to during the research, including informed consent, confidentiality, and considerations related to potential harm to participants. Lastly, this chapter will discuss the potential limitations of the research methodology and how these were mitigated. This chapter aims to offer a clear and transparent explanation of the methodological decisions made during this study. These methodological considerations are crucial to the reliability, validity, and generalizability of the research

findings. By providing a detailed account of the methodology, this study aims to ensure the research process is replicable and its findings are credible.

5.2   Research Design

Public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations were examined using a Sequential Explanatory Design, a mixed methods research method. In this design, quantitative data is collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data. The qualitative phase expands on the quantitative findings from the first phase (Ivankova et al., 2006). The first phase of this research will involve a quantitative survey disseminated to a broad sample of UAE citizens. The study distributed 500 survey questionnaires but received 352 survey questionnaires that were fully completed and answered. While qualitative data collection was involved, the study conducted 6 semi-structured interviews with the respondents. Interviews were conducted until saturation was reached. The data gathered was statistically analyzed to discern patterns and correlations relating to public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations.

The second phase, informed by the results of the first, will involve a qualitative approach, possibly involving semi-structured interview, to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of UAE citizens. This will help in explaining the quantitative results and will add depth and nuance to the overall findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This sequential approach helps to triangulate data and thereby validate and cross-verify findings. It ensures that the research yields a well-rounded understanding of the research problem (Bryman, 2006).

5.3   Research Approach

This study uses deductive research, which involves creating a theory-based hypothesis and a research plan to test it (Saunders et al., 2009). Based on the literature, this study proposes several hypotheses about public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations. Public

diplomacy and soft power are linked, with certain factors moderating or mediating these interactions.

The first quantitative phase will collect data from a representative sample of UAE citizens using structured methods like close-ended surveys. The hypotheses will be tested using statistical analysis of the collected data. The second qualitative phase examines the causes and contexts of quantitative results. This phase will involve interviewing or focus-grouping UAE citizens to understand their perspectives better. The study uses a deductive approach to generalize findings and contributes to the theoretical discourse on public diplomacy and soft power in international relations.

Building on the deductive research approach outlined, this study will explore the intricacies of public diplomacy and soft power within international relations. The mixed-method research strategy, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, offers a comprehensive view that captures the measurable attitudes and the nuanced perspectives of UAE citizens. By interpreting the statistical data in conjunction with personal narratives, the study seeks to uncover more profound insights into how public diplomacy initiatives shape perceptions and soft power's role in shaping international relations. This approach tests the initial hypotheses and enriches the theoretical discourse with empirical evidence. It provides a multi-dimensional understanding of the dynamic interplay between public diplomacy and soft power and their effects on international policy and perception.

5.4   Research Methods

5.4.1   Quantitative Research Method

Given the nature of this research study and its objectives, a mixed-methods approach that includes both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques will be utilized. The first phase of the study will implement a quantitative approach through a structured survey administered to a representative sample of UAE citizens. The purpose of this

survey is to gain a broad overview of perceptions and to test the hypotheses generated by the research (Creswell, 2013). The survey will contain questions designed to gauge respondents' views about various aspects of public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations. These questions will be created based on the relevant literature and the proposed hypotheses. Also, the questionnaire sample is included in the appendices at the end of the report.

5.4.2 Qualitative Research Method

The second phase of the study follows a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews. These methods enable a deeper exploration of the perspectives of UAE citizens on public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations (Silverman, 2013). This phase serves to supplement and provide context for the quantitative data collected in the first phase, by explaining or elaborating on the findings. The qualitative data collected will be subject to thematic analysis, allowing for the identification and interpretation of patterns in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

5.5 Population and sample size

The population for this study is UAE citizens in the Media and UAE Foreign Affairs departments who have a fundamental understanding of public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations. Given that the UAE has a large and diverse population, it is important to capture a wide range of perspectives and experiences. In quantitative research, the sample size depends on the population size, the margin of error, and the confidence level. Given the large population size and the desire for a reasonable margin of error and high confidence level, we may use a sample size calculation formula or a table from statistical literature (Israel, 1992). For the qualitative phase, the sample size is not predetermined in the same way as in quantitative research. Instead, I use the concept of "saturation" (Fusch & Ness, 2015), where

will continue to conduct semi-structured interview until no new themes or information emerges.

The sampling method for both quantitative and qualitative phases should be purposeful, targeting individuals who can provide rich, relevant, and diverse data. In the quantitative phase, stratified sampling or quota sampling may be used to ensure the representation of different demographic groups. In the qualitative phase, we might consider using a criterion sampling strategy, selecting individuals who meet some important criterion (Patton, 2014).

5.6   Data collection procedure

5.6.1   Quantitative data collection

The data collection process for the quantitative portion of this study will be carried out through a survey administered to citizens in Media and Foreign Affairs departments in the UAE. This structured questionnaire will aim to gain insight into the citizens' perspectives about public diplomacy, soft power, international relations, and their interrelationships (see Appendix). The study also sent consent letter to the respondents (see Appendix). The development of the questionnaire will be informed by the theoretical frameworks and constructs identified[52] in the literature review. Each variable foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, economic aids, governance, people and values, media, communication, and international relations will be represented by multiple items in the questionnaire to ensure comprehensive measurement (Bryman, 2016). To ensure validity and reliability, items will be adapted from previously validated scales wherever possible. For instance, items pertaining to soft power might be based on Nye's (2004) conceptualization of the term, which includes aspects such as culture, political values, and foreign policies. A 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," could be used for

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[52] The set of concepts and theoretical perspectives used to guide the research process, shaping the design and interpretation of the study. Recognizing and defining key concepts and theories relevant to a study's topic, as established through comprehensive literature analysis.

responses. The target population for this study is citizens working in Media and Foreign Affairs departments within the UAE. To ensure a representative sample, we might use stratified sampling or quota sampling methods, which ensure the representation of different demographic groups within the target population (Bryman, 2016). Surveys will be administered electronically to accommodate a large sample size and geographical spread across the UAE. Emails containing a brief introduction to the study, an informed consent form, and a link to the online survey will be sent to potential respondents. The study distributed 500 survey questionnaires but received 352 survey questionnaires which were fully completed and answered.

By focusing specifically on individuals within the media and foreign affairs departments, the study targets a demographic uniquely positioned to offer informed perspectives on the nuances of public diplomacy and its influence on soft power. The meticulously structured questionnaire, rooted in theoretical frameworks and existing research, promises a thorough exploration of critical variables like foreign policy, international cooperation, and media influence. The utilization of validated scales and the Likert response format will enhance the study's precision in capturing the attitudes and perceptions of UAE citizens in these crucial sectors. Furthermore, the strategic sampling methods employed are designed to ensure diversity and representation within the respondent pool, thereby bolstering the validity of the findings. The high response rate to the distributed questionnaires suggests a strong engagement with the subject matter, hinting at its relevance and importance to the participants. The ethical considerations in place, including informed consent and confidentiality measures, underscore the study's commitment to upholding the highest standards of research integrity. This comprehensive approach positions the survey to reveal the current state of public diplomacy and soft power in the UAE and inform future strategies and policies in these critical areas of international relations.

To maintain ethical integrity throughout the data collection process, it is essential to provide clear and comprehensive information about the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, the anonymity and confidentiality of responses, and the data storage and handling process (British Educational Research Association, 2018). Informed consent must be obtained from respondents before their participation. Upon the closure of the survey period, the response rate will be calculated, and measures might be taken to improve the response rate, such as reminder emails. To maintain ethical integrity, this study informed participants about its goals and procedures and stressed that their participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time. Informed consent was actively sought before participation to ensure that participants understood their role in the research. The study used follow-up reminder emails after the survey period to ensure a high response rate, justifying that this approach is necessary to collect comprehensive and representative data while respecting participants' rights. Collected data will be cleaned, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis, maintaining strict confidentiality throughout.

5.6.2 Qualitative data collection

For the qualitative portion of this study, we used semi-structured interviews to collect data from UAE citizens[53] working in Media and Foreign Affairs departments. This data collection method is chosen because it provides deeper insights into participants' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions concerning public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). An interview guide was developed based on the research objectives and hypotheses and informed by the themes identified in the literature review. The guide will contain open-ended questions to encourage participants to share their experiences and perspectives freely, as well as prompts to explore specific topics in more depth (Bryman,

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[53] The unique insights and experiences of UAE nationals are crucial for understanding the theoretical frameworks and constructs related to public diplomacy and soft power in the context of the UAE.

2016). For instance, questions could include: "How do you perceive the role of public diplomacy in shaping soft power?", "What impact does foreign policy have on international relations from your perspective?", and "Could you share experiences where you've seen media and communication moderate the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power?"

In qualitative research, the sample size is guided by the concept of saturation - the point at which no new information or themes are observed in the data (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Therefore, the study conducted 6 semi-structured interviews with the respondents. Interviews were conducted until saturation was reached. Potential participants were selected using a purposive sampling strategy, targeting individuals whose knowledge and experience are related to the research topic (Patton, 2014). Invitations to participate in the study, along with the information sheet and consent form, were sent via email. Interviews are conducted either in-person or via a digital platform, depending on participants' preferences and current safety guidelines. The digital interview will be audio-recorded with the participant's consent, and field notes will be taken to capture the context and non-verbal cues (see Appendix for consent letter). As with the quantitative phase, ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, their rights to withdraw at any time, and the steps taken to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses (British Educational Research Association, 2018). Informed consent was obtained before the interviews. Following each interview, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then reviewed while listening to the recordings to ensure accuracy. All data were stored securely, with identifiable information removed to maintain participant anonymity.

5.7   Data analysis

This study used quantitative and qualitative data analysis to address its research objectives fully. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Initial survey data analysis was done in SPSS (Field, 2013),

starting with data cleaning to identify missing values and outliers that could affect results validity. The dataset was summarized using descriptive statistics like means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was then performed to assess the measurement instruments' factor structure, ensuring the validity of this research's scales (Brown, 2015).

Later, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) software was used to test the hypothesized relationships between public diplomacy (focusing on foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid), soft power (governing, culture, media, and communication), and international relations. SEM is an advanced statistical method that analyses multiple dependent relationships with latent variables (Byrne, 2016).

Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data from the semi-structured interview. Finding, analyzing, and reporting data patterns or themes is a common qualitative research method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke's six-step analysis included familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing, defining, naming, and producing the final report. First, the interview transcripts were carefully read and reread to understand the data. The research questions determined the initial codes, which were then grouped into themes. These themes were refined throughout the process to capture key data points. This analysis yielded rich qualitative data insights that supported the research objectives.

This study explored the complex dynamics of UAE public diplomacy and soft power using SPSS and AMOS. SPSS went beyond numerical analysis, providing a critical lens to examine patterns and anomalies and identify underlying trends, as Field (2013) notes. Brown (2015) emphasizes exploratory factor analysis to validate public diplomacy and soft power, ensuring that each variable accurately represents the complexities of international relations.

SEM with AMOS made research more dynamic. According to Byrne (2016), SEM is good at revealing complex relationships between variables, such as how governance and media communication affect soft power. This phase showed theoretical constructs in action, such as how foreign policy leadership fits into international cooperation frameworks.

On the qualitative front, the thematic analysis, guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach, transformed raw interview transcripts into a tapestry of insights. This method went beyond mere coding; it explored the depth of human experience and perception, vividly depicting how public diplomacy is experienced and enacted in the UAE. This analysis brought to life the voices behind the data, weaving narratives that illuminated the intricate relationship between media, communication, and the shaping of international relations. The study, therefore, stands as a testament to the power of combining quantitative precision with qualitative depth, offering a holistic understanding of the UAE soft power dynamics.

5.8   Chapter Summary

The methodology chapter described the philosophical foundation, research design, approach, and methods used in this study to examine public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations from UAE citizens' perspectives. The study used sequential explanatory mixed methods to integrate quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the research problem. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with citizens working in media and foreign affairs, while quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire. Rigorous sampling was used to ensure data accuracy for the target population. The data collected was then processed and analyzed using SPSS, AMOS[54], and thematic analysis for the quantitative and qualitative data respectively. Each stage of the data

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[54] SPSS is a software tool for statistical analysis in social science research, offering advanced data management and analytics techniques. Whereas, AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) is a statistical software package used for structural equation modelling and path analysis, providing a comprehensive framework for modelling complex relationships among observed and latent variables.

analysis was conducted systematically and carefully to guarantee the validity and reliability of the results.

In public diplomacy and soft power, the UAE presents a fascinating case study, particularly when examined through various theoretical lenses and literature. The concept of soft power, central to understanding the UAE international strategy, revolves around the ability of a nation to influence others through cultural and ideological appeal rather than coercion. This is especially relevant to the UAE, which has carved out a unique identity as a modern, progressive nation while maintaining strong cultural and historical roots. The nation's approach to public diplomacy blends traditional diplomatic practices and current, innovative communication strategies. This blend aims to protect the UAE image and values globally, making it a compelling subject of study in international relations.

The literature on the UAE approach to international relations also offers a broad understanding of its foreign policy dynamics. The UAE foreign policy is often characterized by its strategic use of economic and cultural resources to assert its presence in global affairs. Economic diplomacy plays a critical role in this strategy, with the UAE leveraging its financial strength to enhance its soft power. The UAE investments in cultural, educational, and artistic initiatives underscore its commitment to building soft power. These initiatives improve the country's global image and establish it as a cultural and academic excellence hub. Thus, the UAE multifaceted approach to diplomacy and international relations, combining traditional methods with contemporary tactics, positions it as an influential player on the world stage.

The ethical considerations guiding this research were clearly outlined, reflecting a strong commitment to the core principles of research ethics, including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and transparency. All participants were fully briefed about the nature and objectives of the study, and their anonymity was strictly maintained throughout the research process. These ethical safeguards were crucial in establishing trust,

ensuring the credibility of the data collected, and protecting the rights and dignity of participants.

Methodologically, the study employed qualitative and Quantitative approaches, carefully chosen to align with the exploratory nature of the research questions and to provide a nuanced, in-depth understanding of how public diplomacy functions as a tool of soft power. The use of interviews and document analysis allowed for the triangulation of data, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. The methodological design was rooted in the aim to uncover the underlying narratives, strategies, and perceptions that shape the UAE's international image and diplomatic influence.

The insights derived from this robust and ethically sound methodology not only serve to support the research hypotheses but also offer valuable contributions to the broader academic discourse on international relations and soft power. The next chapters will present the key findings, followed by a critical discussion that connects the empirical data to the theoretical frameworks reviewed earlier. The final chapter will summarize the conclusions and offer recommendations for policy and future research.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESES

TESTING RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter dealt with the evaluation of the study tool through a set of tests, for example (the test Alpha Cronbach to identify the stability of the study tool, Pearson's correlation coefficient for knowledge, the internal consistency of the study tool, the composite stability test, and the average variance extracted), and then the calculation of ratios was dealt with Percentages and frequencies for demographic variables, then descriptive statistics of the study axes through some measure of dispersion and central tendency), and finally testing the study hypotheses through a set of tests or statistical methods, for example, the Pearson test to measure the relationship between the variables under study, and the simple and multiple linear regression test to measure the relationship between the variables under this study.

6.2 Coding of the survey questionnaire

Table 6.1 presents the coding structure that was utilized for the questionnaire in this research. Each major variable and its associated dimensions have been outlined, along with the symbols used to represent them, for ease of analysis. The first variable, public diplomacy (PD), is delineated into four distinct dimensions: international cooperation (IC), economic aid (EA), foreign policy (FP), and UAE leadership (UL). These dimensions represent different facets of the UAE public diplomacy efforts. The questionnaire included five questions (paragraphs) per dimension, for a total of 20 questions probing various aspects of public diplomacy. The second variable, soft power strategy (SPS), is broken down into three dimensions: media and communication (MC), governance (G), and people and values (PV). These dimensions reflect the diverse components of the UAE soft power strategy. The questionnaire encompassed a different number of questions for each dimension: 7 for media and communication, 8 for people and values, and 8 for governance, summing up to a total of 22 questions examining the elements of soft power strategy. The third variable, foreign affairs (FA), is measured in terms of international relations (IR). This dimension captures the UAE relations with foreign countries,

an essential aspect of foreign affairs. The questionnaire contained seven questions specifically designed to explore this dimension. Therefore, this coding scheme was essential for structuring the questionnaire and organizing the data for analysis. It ensured that each component of public diplomacy, soft power strategy, and foreign affairs was appropriately represented and thoroughly probed, thereby facilitating a comprehensive investigation into the UAE citizens' views on these key variables. The allocated number of questions per dimension reflected the necessity to cover different aspects and nuances within each category.

Table 6.1: Coding the survey questionnaire

Variables	variables symbol	Dimensions of variables	Dimension code	The number of paragraphs per dimension
1-PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (F1)	PD	1.1-International Cooperation	IC	5
		1.2-Economic Aids	EA	5
		1.3-Foreign Policy	FP	5
		1.4-UAE Leadership	UL	5
2- Soft power strategy(F2)	SPS	2.1 – Media and Communication	MC	7
		2.2-Governance	G	8
		2.3 - People and Values	PV	7

| 3 – **Foreign** FA | 3.1- International IR | 7 |
| **Affairs(F3)** | Relation(F3) | |

Source: Researcher

6.3. Evaluation of the study tool

The evaluation of the measurement tool aims to evaluate the validity and reliability of the measures that were used in the study. For this purpose, the study conducted inter-rated correlations to measure the validity of the measurement items and Cronbach alpha to measure reliability of the survey items. With the SPSS program, the results of the measurement tool test were obtained, which displays the results of the following table, which shows the achievement of all paragraphs of the axes for the minimum criteria for evaluating the measurement tool. SPSS was also used to test the reliability (i.e., Cronbach alpha). On the other hand, the study used IBM AMOS to test the research hypotheses (SEM analysis, regression analysis with effects).

6.3.1 Cronbach alpha

Table 6.2 presents the results of the reliability analysis, represented by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, for each of the axes and dimensions of the study, as well as the number of items included in each. The first axis, Public Diplomacy, comprises four dimensions: International Cooperation, Economic Aid, Foreign Policy[55], and UAE Leadership. Each dimension includes five items, totalling 20 items for the first axis. The Cronbach's Alpha values for these dimensions range from .694 to .710, indicating satisfactory to good internal consistency within each dimension. The overall Cronbach's Alpha for the first axis is .876, indicating a high level of internal consistency for this set of items.

The study performed six semi-structured interviews with respondents. Interviews

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[55] Foreign Policy refers to the strategies and principles that guide a nation's international relations and diplomacy, shaping its interactions with other countries and international organizations.

continued till saturation. Purposive sampling was used to choose participants with relevant knowledge and expertise (Patton, 2014). Email invitations, information sheets, and consent forms were distributed to research participants. Participants' choices and safety restrictions determine whether interviews are performed in person or online. With approval, each interview will be audio-recorded, and field notes will be collected to capture context and non-verbal clues. Like the quantitative phase, ethical standards were followed. Participants were told of the study's aim, their freedom to withdraw, and how their replies would be kept secret and anonymous (British et al. Association, 2018). Interviews were conducted with informed consent. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim after each interview.

The second axis, Soft Power, consists of three dimensions: Media and Communication, Governance, and People and Values. The Cronbach's Alpha values for these dimensions range from .649 to .773, suggesting acceptable to good internal consistency within each dimension. This axis has a total of 22 items and an overall Cronbach's Alpha of .891, indicating a high level of internal consistency for the whole set of items. The third axis, Foreign Affairs, includes one dimension: International Relations, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of .735, indicating good internal consistency. This axis includes seven items. The overall Cronbach's Alpha for the entire scale of the study, which includes all axes and dimensions and a total of 49 items, is .937. This value suggests excellent internal consistency for the overall scale, showing that the questionnaire items are highly interrelated and provide a reliable measure of the constructs of interest in the study. Therefore, the Cronbach's Alpha values obtained from the reliability analysis indicate that the questionnaire is a dependable tool for assessing the variables of interest in this study. The high internal consistency across all axes and dimensions suggests that the questions within each dimension are measuring the same underlying construct and are, therefore, suitable for the study's objectives.

Table 6.2. Cronbach alpha and Number of items

Study axes and dimensions	Alpha coefficient Cronbach	number of items
The first axis: Public diplomacy		
1.1-International Cooperation	0.696	5
1.2-Economic Aids	0.728	5
1.3-Foreign Policy	0.694	5
1.4-UAE Leadership	0.710	5
Total first axis:	0.876	20
The second axis: Soft Power		
2.1 – Media and Communication	0.649	5
2.2-Governance	0.773	8
2.3 - People and Values	0.742	7
Total axis two	0.891	22
Third axis: Foreign Affairs		
3.1- International Relation	0.735	7
total scale	0.937	49

Source: SPSS

6.3.2 Validity of the study tool

Experts verified the study tool's validity. A panel of experts evaluated the tool. Their input ensured the tool's relevance and representation of the study's core themes' questions or items. The experts also checked the questions' linguistic clarity and suitability for measuring each study axis. This process verified the tool's accuracy and research goals.

6.3.2.1 Internal consistency validity[56]

Table 6.3 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients and associated significance levels for a series of items related to the dimensions of Public Diplomacy: International Cooperation (IC), Economic Aids (EA), Foreign Policy (FP), and UAE Leadership (UL). The purpose of these analyses is to assess the internal consistency of these dimensions by examining the correlations between individual items and the overall Public Diplomacy score. The correlation coefficients for all items range from .513 to .639, indicating moderate to strong positive correlations with Public Diplomacy. The fact that all correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed) underscores the strength and significance of these relationships. The strength of these correlations suggests that the variations in the answers to these items correspond strongly with the variations in the overall Public Diplomacy score, meaning that these items are cohesive in measuring the construct of Public Diplomacy.

For instance, the statement "Human rights are respected in UAE?" (IC1) correlates positively with the Public Diplomacy construct with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.567, indicating a strong positive relationship. Likewise, "An entrepreneurial spirit is observed in UAE foreign policy?" (EA5) also shows a strong correlation (0.601) with the overall construct. In the dimension of UAE Leadership, the highest correlation is observed with the item "The leadership in UAE is committed to financially support all resources needed to support the design, development, delivery, and management in UAE?" (UL3), with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.610. This implies a strong positive relationship, suggesting that this item is especially good at capturing aspects related to Public Diplomacy from a leadership perspective. Overall, the correlations presented in Table 6.3 show strong internal consistency within the Public Diplomacy construct, indicating that these items collectively measure the same underlying concept. This suggests that the instrument used in this study provides a reliable

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[56] Internal Consistency Validity is a measure of the reliability of a survey or test, indicated by the extent to which all parts of the instrument contribute equally to the final score.

measurement of the construct of Public Diplomacy.

Table 6.3: Internal consistency of public diplomacy

Public diplomacy	Pearson correlation coefficient	The level of significance
IC1-Human rights are respected in UAE?	0.567**	0.000
IC2-UAE pays attention to advancing global economic?	0.527**	0.000
IC3-UAE enhances peace advocacy?	0.598**	0.000
IC4-Development cooperation is enhanced in UAE?	0.544**	0.000
IC5-It is clearly observed that humanitarian assistance is enhanced in UAE?	0.582**	0.000
EA1-Based on the UAE foreign policy, the importance of economic relations with other countries is UAE concern?	0.639**	0.000
EA2-Several countries are being developed in economies by UAE?	0.585**	0.000
EA3-It is seen in the foreign policy of UAE that the competitive economy is being a UAE focus?	0.541**	0.000
EA4-UAE offers economic opportunities for workforce?	0.566**	0.000
EA5-An entrepreneurial spirit is observed in UAE foreign policy?	0.601**	0.000
FP1-The foreign policies of UAE aim to establish the philosophy that 1 diplomacy should be one of the	0.513**	0.000

strategic priorities for putting into practice the UAE

Global Strategy?

FP2-It is highlighted by UAE foreign policies that the necessity of combining efforts in the field of 1 diplomacy, including strategic communication, both inside and outside the nation?	0.605**	**0.000**
FP3-UAE has made it a priority in establishing its foreign policy to maintain strong links with countries in the Arab and Muslim world?	0.585**	**0.000**
FP4-The foreign policy strategy of UAE has a significant support and assistance to the region through a variety of means?	0.532**	**0.000**
FP5-In UAE, economic as well as humanitarian aids have developed into an important component of the country's foreign policy?	0.553**	**0.000**
UL1-UAE leadership is aware of the succession of the 1 diplomacy?	0.541**	**0.000**
UL2-In UAE, the leadership structure is in place to manage the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of 1 diplomacy effectively?	0.557**	**0.000**
UL3-The leadership in UAE is committed to financially support all resources needed to support the design, development, delivery, and management in UAE?	0.610**	**0.000**

UL4-The citizens of UAE are motivated by their leaders towards achieving the country's 1 diplomacy effectively and achieving the country's goals?	0.561**	**0.000**
UL5-UAE leadership is good at adapting to different situations?	0.602**	**0.000**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author

Table 6.4 displays the Pearson correlation coefficients for various Soft Power indicators within the UAE. These coefficients assess the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables, with values ranging from -1 to +1. A value of +1 signifies a perfect positive correlation, -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation, and 0 suggests no correlation. In this analysis, all coefficients are positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), demonstrating strong, positive relationships between the Soft Power indicators and their corresponding variables. All the aspects measured (MC1 to MC7) showed moderate to strong positive correlations (0.531 to 0.605), indicating a strong relationship between UAE media communication and soft power. The significant positive correlations suggest that UAE influence on global conversations through digital platforms, its investment in media outlets to promote its views, its use of social media for diplomacy, and its media activities of high-ranking officials, among other things, are all positively related to the perception of UAE soft power.

Governance measures[57] (G1 to G8) showed moderate to strong positive correlations (.502 to .613). The correlations suggest that the effective leadership, respect for sovereignty,

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[57] Governance Measures in Soft Power: These refer to a government's strategies and actions in areas like leadership, respect for sovereignty, and building trust, which are crucial for enhancing a nation's soft power capabilities. Governance measures play a pivotal role in strengthening a nation's international influence and reputation, underpinning the effectiveness of its weak power strategy.

trust and cooperation building, and governance diplomacy all play significant roles in shaping UAE soft power. Moreover, UAE ability to lead multinational corporations and evaluate and bolster its soft power credentials seems to have a strong positive impact on its soft power. The coefficients for political values (PV1 to PV7) range from 0.502 to 0.610, showing moderate to strong positive relationships. The results imply that UAE political system, its commitment to core values and human rights, its modern values of openness and individualism, its influence in the region, its strong nation branding, and the alignment between nation brand and soft power strategy all positively influence its soft power. Therefore, the analysis indicates that UAE soft power is significantly influenced by its media communication, governance, and political values. Each of these aspects seems to contribute to a strong perception of UAE soft power, signifying the importance of these components in the strategic implementation of soft power diplomacy. Future policies aiming to further improve UAE soft power should consider bolstering these domains.

Table 6.4: Internal consistency of soft power

Soft power	Pearson correlation coefficient	The level of significance
MC1-Public opinion and influence global conversations are shaped in UAE through websites, blogs, and social media?	0.597**	**0.000**
MC2-UAE invests in media outlets to promote its views, policies, education, and humanitarian aids?	0.531**	**0.000**
MC3-UAE the most focused is the use of social media for 1 diplomacy (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)?	0.579**	**0.000**

MC4-Most of the current e-diplomacy coverage focuses on 1 diplomacy, with the use of media activities of presidents or ministers contributing to the creation of a positive country brand in UAE?	0.541**	**0.000**
MC5-UAE implements communication skill to represent the ability and knowledge to extend its own outreach and visibility?	0.567**	**0.000**
MC6-Media and communications plan can frequently be used to resolve issues quickly?	0.605**	**0.000**
MC7-Do you think that Media platforms are strong enough for an international audience and able to pass UAE values (culture) and reflect in positive way on soft power strategy?	0.561**	**0.000**
G1-Governance diplomacy is used in UAE to solve problems?	0.572**	**0.000**
G2-Governance sovereignty is respected as a real occurring concept in UAE?	0.529**	**0.000**
G3-Governance trust and cooperation are built in UAE with its citizens?	0.612**	**0.000**
G4-UAE governance has effective leadership that enhances effective relationship with its people?	0.590**	**0.000**
G5-UAE governance enhances leading multinational corporations?	0.613**	**0.000**
G6-In UAE, governments and other major institutions do to evaluate and bolster their soft power credentials?	0.600**	**0.000**

G7-UAE governance attempt at setting priorities for governments to enhance their standing abroad and direct policy direction?	0.602**	**0.000**
G8-The governance of UAE has little control over a significant portion of the effects of its soft power use?	0.502**	**0.000**
PV1-The political system in UAE serves its people?	0.515**	**0.000**
PV2-A commitment is seen as core values, including its own peoples' human rights in UAE?	0.539**	**0.000**
PV3-UAE as the beacon of modernity with its values of openness, mobility, individualism, pluralism, voluntarism, and freedom?	0.589**	**0.000**
PV4-The influence in the region has been affected by UAE policy?	0.585**	**0.000**
PV5-A strong nation brand and positive soft power perceptions are enhanced by UAE policy?	0.542**	**0.000**
PV6-In UAE, people are enabled to improve their standings among its neighbors, market its resources, and craft the image it projects on the global stage?	0.578**	**0.000**
PV7-The alignment between nation brand and soft power strategy can produce better results in UAE?	0.610**	**0.000**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author

Table 6.5 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients for various measures of Foreign Affairs within the UAE. Each value signifies the strength and direction of the linear relationship between each measure of Foreign Affairs and the UAE international relations. The correlation

coefficients for the measures related to International Relations (IR1 to IR7) all show strong positive correlations (0.549 to 0.662), which are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This suggests that each of these variables is positively related to the UAE international relations. The variables include the UAE implementation of international cooperation, its provision of economic aid, its effectiveness in enhancing international relations, the strength of its foreign policy, the impact of its foreign policies, its focus on people and values, and the role of media and communication.

Each of these correlation values suggests that these variables play a significant role in strengthening the UAE international relations. For example, the correlation coefficient of 0.662 (IR4) indicates a particularly strong relationship between the UAE foreign policy and its international relations. Therefore, the data shows a consistent positive correlation between the UAE foreign affairs variables and its international relations, indicating that the UAE implementation of international cooperation, economic aid, focus on people and values, and the use of media and communication all contribute to strengthening its international relations. The strong correlation values suggest that these are all key areas of focus for the UAE in its efforts to enhance its position on the global stage. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that continued emphasis and improvements in these areas could lead to even stronger international relations for the UAE.

Table 6.5:   Internal consistency of foreign affairs

Foreign affairs	Pearson correlation coefficient	The level of significance
IR1-The implementations of international cooperation in UAE enhance its international relation positively?	0.633**	**0.000**

IR2-UAE implementations of economic aids enhance its international relation position?	0.656**	**0.000**
IR3-UAE effectively enhances its international relation with other countries?	0.634**	**0.000**
IR4-The present foreign policy of UAE strengthens its international relation?	0.662**	**0.000**
IR5-UAE foreign policies positively affect international relation?	0.614**	**0.000**
IR6-UAE focus on people and values positively affects its international relation practices?	0.609**	**0.000**
IR7-Media and communication may enhance the effectiveness of UAE international relation?	0.549**	**0.000**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author

6.4   Percentages and frequencies of demographic variables

It is clear from the previous table that 192 of the respondents are males (54.5%), while 160 are females (45.5%). This indicates a slightly higher representation of males in the sample compared to females. Although the difference is not extreme, it may reflect demographic trends or accessibility factors relevant to the study's context. The distribution suggests that the findings may slightly lean toward male perspectives, which is important to consider when interpreting results related to public diplomacy, media engagement, or soft power influence. The gender distribution is visually represented in the following figure, which provides a clearer picture of the sample composition and helps contextualize the research findings in terms of gender-based perspectives and potential implications.

Table 5.6:   Gender

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	192	54.5	54.5	54.5
	Female	160	45.5	45.5	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
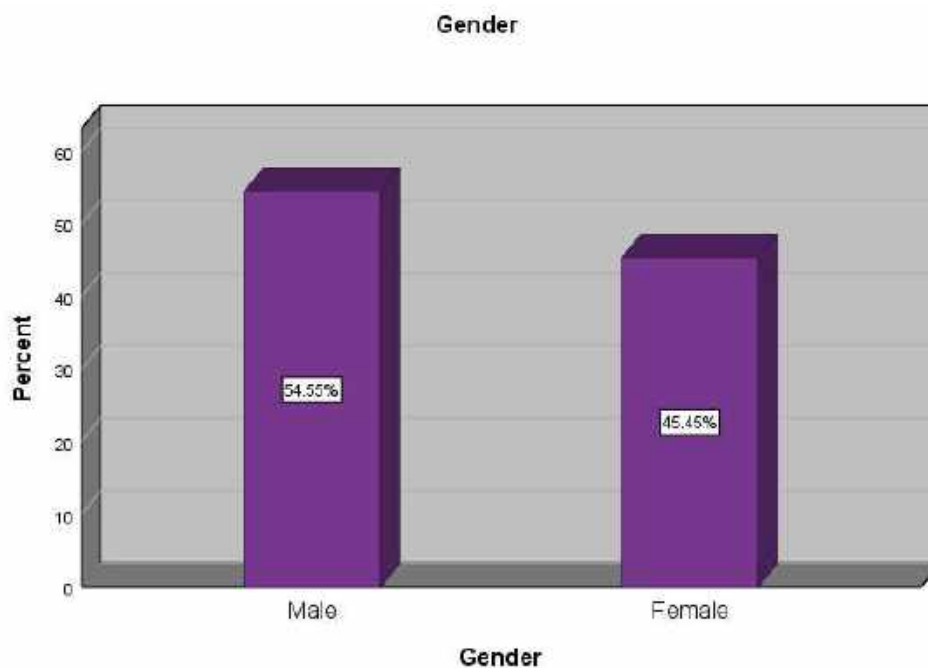
Figure 6.1: Gender

It is clear from the previous table that 140, their ages range from (31-40) with a rate of 39.8%, and this category represents the largest number of responses from the study sample, and in the second order came 89 whose ages range from (25-30) with a rate of 25.3%, and in the third order 85 whose ages ranging from (41-50) by 24.1%, and in the fourth place, 20, whose ages range from (less than 24), and finally 15, whose ages range from (51 or above). This category represents the lowest number of responses from the study sample, and this is evident in the following figure:

Table 6.7:   Age

Age		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Vali d	Less than 24	20	5.7	5.7	5.7
	25 – 30	89	25.3	25.3	31.0
	31 – 40	140	39.8	39.8	70.7
	41 – 50	85	24.1	24.1	94.9
	51 or above	18	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
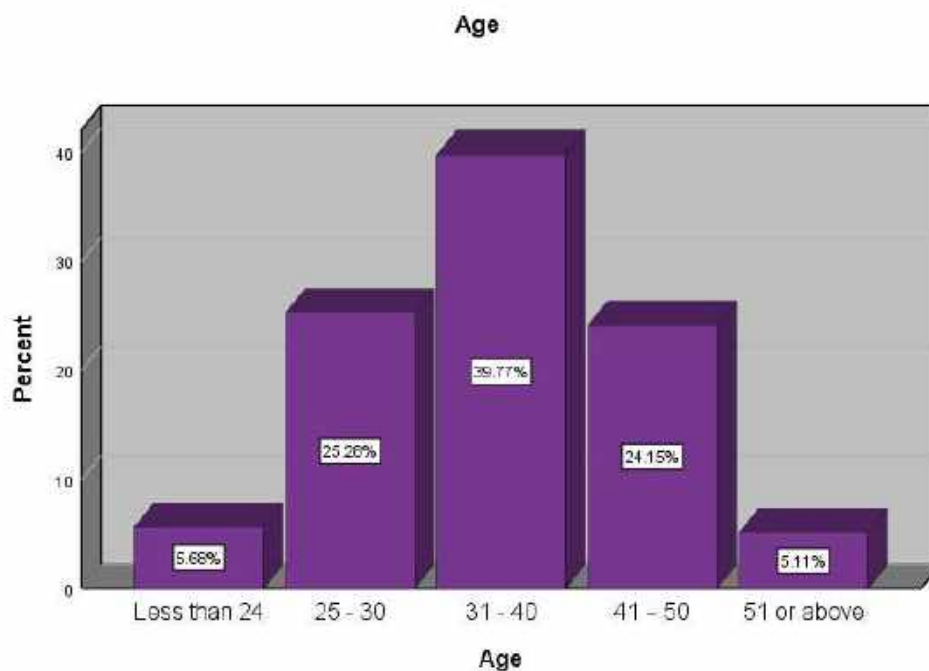
Figure 6.2: Age

It is clear from the previous table that 123 have years of experience ranging from (6-10) with a rate of 34.9%. And in the third rank came 60 of those with years of experience ranging from (11-19) with a rate of 17.0%, and in the fourth rank 29 of those with years of experience ranging from (20 or above) with a rate of 8.2%, and finally 28 of those with years of experience ranging

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from (0 - 2) These categories represent the least number of responses from the study sample, and this is illustrated by the following figure:

Table 6.8:   Number of total years of work experience

No. of total years of work experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 – 2	28	8.0	8.0	8.0
	3 – 5	112	31.8	31.8	39.8
	6 – 10	123	34.9	34.9	74.7
	11- 19	60	17.0	17.0	91.8
	20 or above	29	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
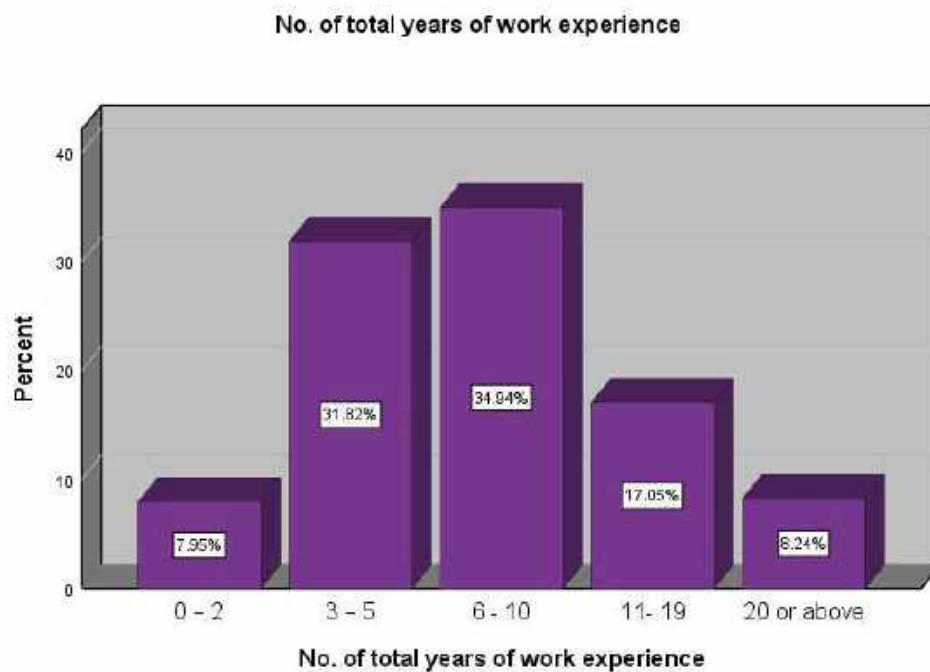
Figure 6.3: No. of total years of work experience

It is clear from the previous table that 250 of the respondents hold Emirati nationality (UAE National) at a rate of (71.0%), while 102 of the respondents do not hold Emirati nationality (Non-UAE National) at a rate of (29.0%), and this indicates a high percentage of Emiratis in the sample. Through the following figure:

Table 6.9: Nationality

Nationality					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	UAE National	250	71.0	71.0	71.0
	Non-UAE National	102	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
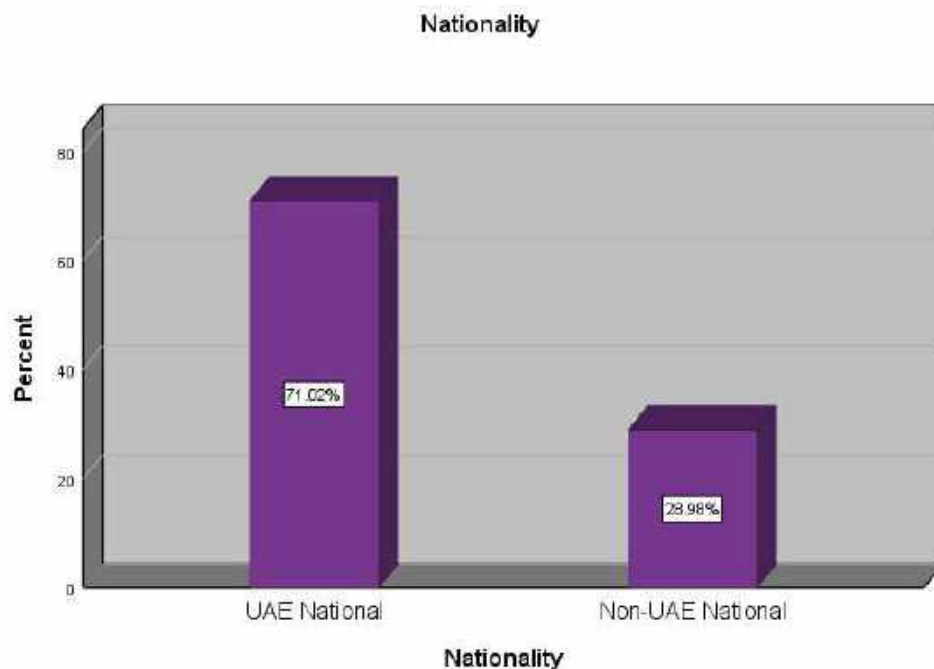
Figure 6.4: Nationality

According to the data of the study, as shown in the previous table, the study sample was

distributed according to the variable of the level of education to 144 for the category of Higher

Diploma/bachelor's degree with a rate of 40.9%, which represents the largest percentage of

respondents, and in the second rank came 98 from the category of Masters with a rate of 27.8%,

and in the third rank 64 From the High school graduate or Less category with 18.2%, and in

the fourth rank 34 from the Doctorate or above category with 9.7% and finally 12 from the

College degree category with 3.4%, which represents the lowest percentage of respondents,

and this is evident in the following figure:

Table 6.10: Educational Level

Educational Level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High school graduate or less	64	18.2	18.2	18.2
	College degree	12	3.4	3.4	21.6
	Higher Diploma/bachelor's degree	144	40.9	40.9	62.5
	Masters	98	27.8	27.8	90.3
	Doctorate or above	34	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
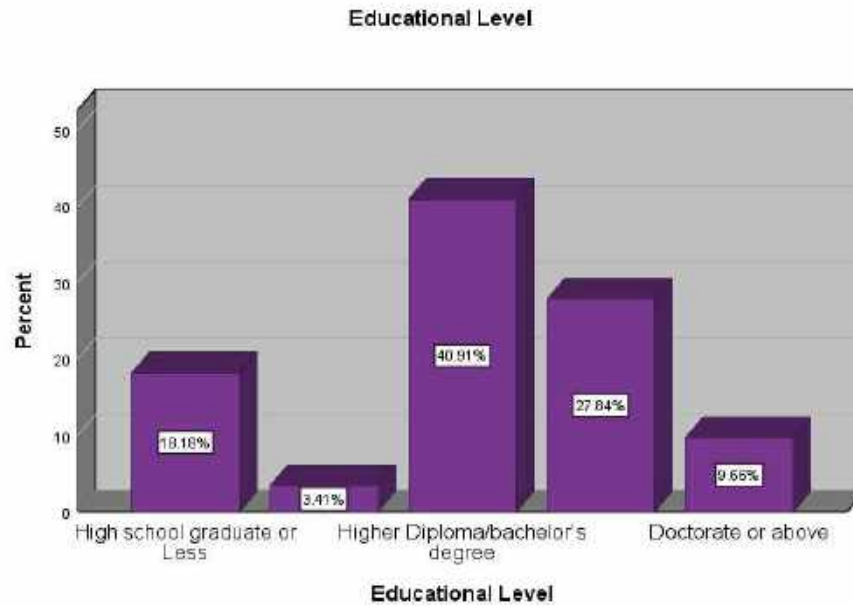
Figure 6.5: Educational level

According to the data of the study, as shown in the previous table, the study sample was distributed according to the variable Type of your organization to 124 of the Private category with a rate of 35.2%, which represents the largest percentage of respondents, and in the second place came 122 from the Public category with a rate of 34.7%, and in the third place 83 from the category of Public Semi Government with a percentage of 23.6%, and finally 23 from the Other category with a percentage of 6.5%, which represents the lowest percentage of respondents, and this is evident in the following figure:

Table 6.11: Type of your organization

Type of your organization					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Public	122	34.7	34.7	34.7
	Private	124	35.2	35.2	69.9
	Semi-Government	83	23.6	23.6	93.5

	Other	23	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
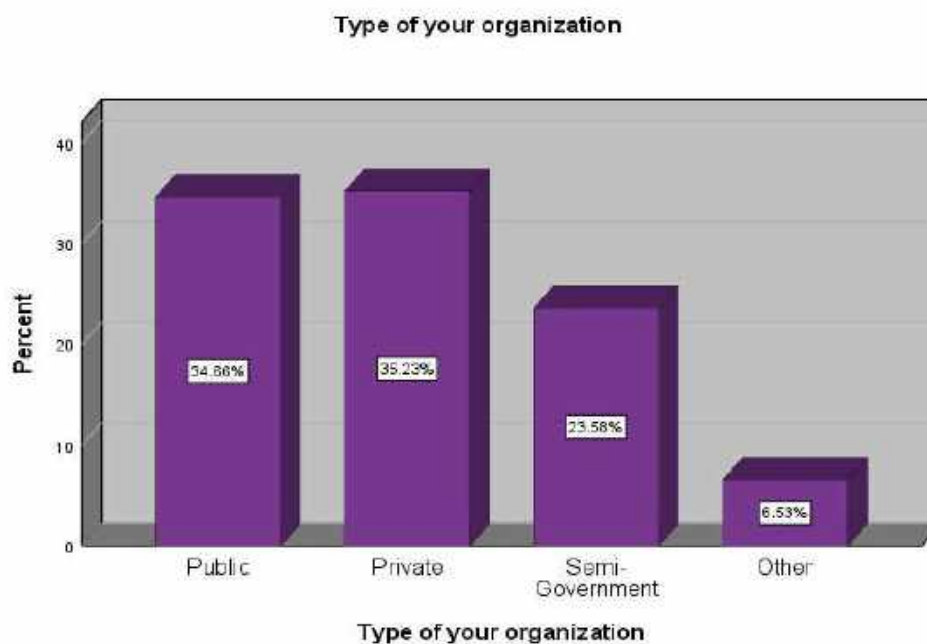
Figure 6.6: Type of your organization

Based on the study data presented in the previous table, the sample was categorized according to the variable "Size of your organization." The largest group, comprising 149 respondents (42.3%), belonged to organizations with a size ranging from 1,000 to 4,999 employees. The second-largest group included 88 respondents (25.0%) from organizations with 50 to 999 employees. In third place, 83 respondents (23.6%) were from organizations with 5,000 or more employees. The fourth category consisted of 22 respondents (6.3%) from organizations with 1 to 49 employees. Lastly, 10 respondents (2.8%) selected "Do not know," representing the smallest portion of the sample, as illustrated in the following figure.

Table 6.12: Size of your organization (1s' number)

Size of your organization (1s' number)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 – 49	22	6.3	6.3	6.3
	50 – 999	88	25.0	25.0	31.3
	1,000 - 4,999	149	42.3	42.3	73.6
	5,000 or more	83	23.6	23.6	97.2
	Do not know	10	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher

Figure 6.7: Size of your organization (1ˢᵗ Number)

The study data, as outlined in the previous table, indicates that the sample was distributed according to the job level variable. The majority of respondents, 168 individuals (47.7%), were from the Middle Management category, representing the largest group. Following this, 117

respondents (33.2%) were categorized as Employees, while the smallest group, 67 respondents (19.0%), belonged to the Top Management category. These distributions are further illustrated in the accompanying figure.

Table 6.13: Job Level

Job Level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employee	117	33.2	33.2	33.2
	Middle Management	168	47.7	47.7	81.0
	Top Management	67	19.0	19.0	100.0
	Total	352	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher
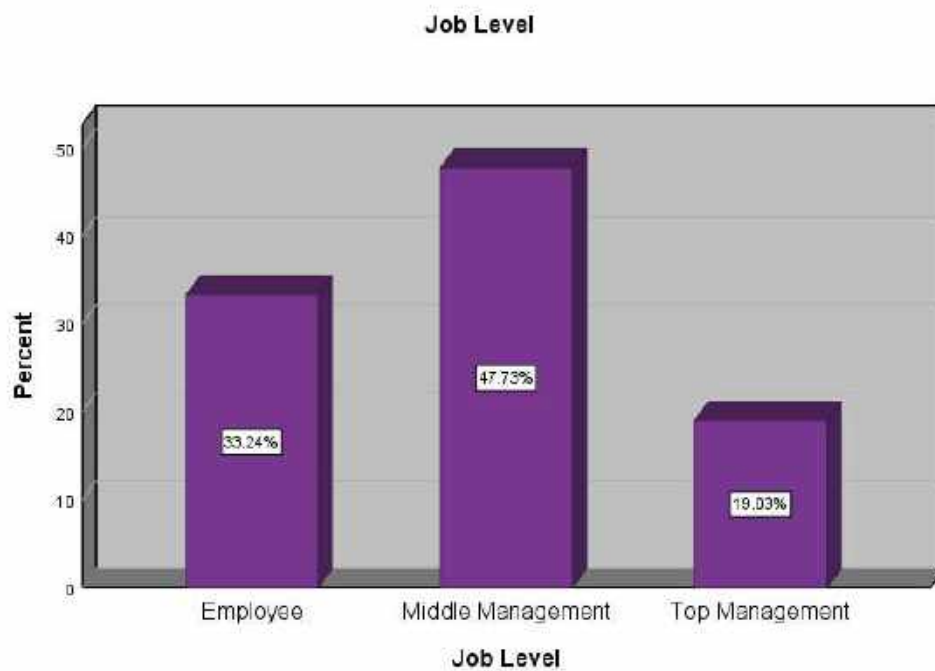
Figure 6.8: Job level

6.5 Descriptive statistics of the dimensions of the study

6.5.1 Public diplomacy

6.5.1.1 International Cooperation

It is clear from the previous table for the first dimension (International Cooperation) that the highest mean was for the item that states (IC3-UAE enhances peace advocacy?), with an arithmetic mean of 4.53, with a standard deviation of 0.754, while the lowest mean was for the item that states (IC5-It is clearly observed that humanitarian assistance is enhanced in UAE?), with an arithmetic mean of 4.14, with a standard deviation of 0.833.

Table 6.14: International cooperation

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
IC1-Human rights are respected in UAE?	352	4.24	0.806
IC2-UAE pays attention to advancing global economic?	352	4.29	0.749
IC3-UAE enhances peace advocacy?	352	4.53	0.754
IC4-Development cooperation is enhanced in UAE?	352	4.23	0.767
IC5-It is clearly observed that humanitarian assistance is enhanced in UAE?	352	4.14	0.833
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Source: Author

6.5.1.2 Economic Aids

It is clear from the previous table for the second dimension (Economic Aids) that the highest mean was for the item that states (EA4-UAE offers economic opportunities for workforce, with an arithmetic mean of 4.33 , with a standard deviation of 0.759 , while the

lowest mean was for the item that states (EA1-Based on the UAE foreign policy, the importance of economic relations with other countries is UAE concern ?), with an arithmetic mean[58] of 3.96, with a standard deviation of 0.871.

Table 6.15: Economic Aids

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
EA1-Based on the UAE foreign policy, the importance of economic relations with other countries is UAE concern?	352	3.96	0.871
EA2-Several countries are being developed in economies by UAE?	352	4.27	0.816
EA3-It is seen in the foreign policy of UAE that the competitive economy is being a UAE focus?	352	4.09	0.805
EA4-UAE offers economic opportunities for workforce?	352	4.33	0.759
EA5-An entrepreneurial spirit is observed in UAE foreign policy?	352	4.24	0.784
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Source: Researcher

6.5.1.3 Foreign Policy

It is clear from the previous table for the third dimension (Foreign Policy) that the highest average was for the item that states(FP3-UAE has made it a priority in establishing its foreign policy to maintain strong links with countries in the Arab and Muslim world?) , with an arithmetic mean of 4.27 , with a standard deviation of 0.743, while the lowest average was

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[58] The arithmetic mean, commonly known as the average, is a statistical measure calculated by dividing the sum of values in a data set by the number of values. In research, the arithmetic mean represents a data set's central tendency, providing a quick snapshot of the data's overall trend.

for the item that states (FP1-The foreign policies of UAE aim to establish the philosophy that

1 diplomacy should be one of the strategic priorities for putting into practice the UAE Global

Strategy?), with an arithmetic mean of 3.89, with a standard deviation of 0.825.

Table 6.17: Foreign Policy

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
FP1-The foreign policies of UAE aim to establish the philosophy that 1 diplomacy should be one of the strategic priorities for putting into practice the UAE Global Strategy?	352	3.89	0.825
FP2-It is highlighted by UAE foreign policies that the necessity of combining efforts in the field of 1 diplomacy, including strategic communication, both inside and outside the nation?	352	4.09	0.792
FP3-UAE has made it a priority in establishing its foreign policy to maintain strong links with countries in the Arab and Muslim world?	352	4.27	0.743
FP4-The foreign policy strategy of UAE has a significant support and assistance to the region through a variety of means?	352	4.23	0.800
FP5-In UAE, economic as well as humanitarian aids have developed into an important component of the country's foreign policy?	352	4.16	0.815
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Source: Researcher

6.5.1.4 UAE Leadership

It is clear from the previous table for the fourth dimension (UAE Leadership(that the highest mean was for the item that states (UL5-UAE leadership is good at adapting to different situations?), with an arithmetic mean of 4.43, with a standard deviation of .763, while the lowest mean was for the item that states (UL2-In UAE, the leadership structure is in place to manage the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of 1 diplomacy effectively), with an arithmetic mean of 3.85 , with a standard deviation[59] of 842 .

Table 6.18: UAE Leadership

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
UL1-UAE leadership is aware of the succession of the 1 diplomacy?	352	4.36	0.778
UL2-In UAE, the leadership structure is in place to manage the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of 1 diplomacy effectively?	352	3.85	0.842
UL3-The leadership in UAE is committed to financially support all resources needed to support the design, development, delivery, and management in UAE?	352	4.08	0.822
UL4-The citizens of UAE are motivated by their leaders towards achieving the country's 1 diplomacy effectively and achieving the country's goals?	352	4.27	0.771
UL5-UAE leadership is good at adapting to different situations?	352	4.43	0.763
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Source: Researcher

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[59] Standard Deviation: A statistical measure that quantifies the variation or dispersion in a set of data values, indicating how spread out the numbers are from the mean.

6.5.2 Soft Power

6.5.2.1 Media and Communicate

Table 6.19: *Media and Communicate*

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
MC1-Public opinion and influence global conversations are shaped in UAE through websites, blogs, and social media?	352	4.03	0.819
MC2-UAE invests in media outlets to promote its views, policies, education, and humanitarian aids?	352	4.36	0.776
MC3-UAE the most focused is the use of social media for 1 diplomacy (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)?	352	4.23	0.768
MC4-Most of the current e-diplomacy coverage focuses on 1 diplomacy, with the use of media activities of presidents or ministers contributing to the creation of a positive country brand in UAE?	352	3.72	0.838
MC5-UAE implements communication skill to represent the ability and knowledge to extend its own outreach and visibility?	352	4.33	0.742
MC6-Media and communications plan can frequently be used to resolve issues quickly?	352	4.32	0.740
MC7-Do you think that Media platforms are strong enough for an international audience and able to pass UAE values (culture) and reflect in positive way on soft power strategy?	352	3.86	0.870
Valid N (listwise)	352		

It is clear from the previous table for the first dimension) Media and Communication)that the

highest mean was for the item that states (MC2-UAE invests in media outlets to promote its

views, policies, education, and humanitarian aids ?), with an arithmetic mean of 4.36 , with a standard deviation of .776 , while the lowest mean was for the item that states (MC4-Most of the current e-diplomacy coverage focuses on 1 diplomacy, with the use of media activities of presidents or ministers contributing to the creation of a positive country brand in UAE?), with an arithmetic mean of 3.72 , with a standard deviation of .838.

Table 6.20: Governance

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
G1-Governance diplomacy is used in UAE to solve problems?	352	4.32	0.786
G2-Governance sovereignty is respected as a real occurring concept in UAE?	352	4.20	0.768
G3-Governance trust and cooperation are built in UAE with its citizens?	352	4.34	0.731
G4-UAE governance has effective leadership that enhances effective relationship with its people?	352	4.18	0.801
G5-UAE governance enhances leading multinational corporations?	352	4.37	0.743
G6-In UAE, governments and other major institutions do to evaluate and bolster their soft power credentials?	352	4.11	0.780
G7-UAE governance attempt at setting priorities for governments to enhance their standing abroad and direct policy direction?	352	4.05	0.774
G8-The governance of UAE has little control over a significant portion of the effects of its soft power use?	352	4.24	0.876
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Source: Researcher

6.5.2.2 Governance

It is clear from the previous table for the second dimension (Governance) that the highest mean was for the item that states) G5-UAE governance enhances leading multinational corporations?) , with an arithmetic mean of 4.37 , with a standard deviation of .743 , while the lowest mean was for the item that states (G7-UAE governance attempt at setting priorities for governments to enhance their standing abroad and direct policy direction, with an arithmetic mean of 4.05, with a standard deviation of 774.

Table 6.21: People and values

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PV1-The political system in UAE serves its people?	352	4.31	0.832
PV2-A commitment is seen as core values, including its own peoples' human rights in UAE?	352	4.20	0.758
PV3-UAE as the beacon of modernity with its values of openness, mobility, individualism, pluralism, voluntarism, and freedom?	352	4.05	0.801
PV4-The influence in the region has been affected by UAE policy?	352	4.44	0.764
PV5-A strong nation brand and positive soft power perceptions are enhanced by UAE policy?	352	4.11	0.804
PV6-In UAE, people are enabled to improve their standings among its neighbors, market its resources, and craft the image it projects on the global stage?	352	3.83	0.830
PV7-The alignment between nation brand and soft power strategy can produce better results in UAE?	352	4.34	0.808
Valid N (listwise)	352		

 Source: Researcher

6.5.2.3 People and Values

It is clear from the previous table for the third dimension (People and Values[60])that the highest average was for the item that states (PV4-The influence in the region has been affected by UAE policy?), with an arithmetic mean of 4.44 , with a standard deviation of .764 , while the lowest average was for the item that states (PV6-In UAE, people are enabled to improve their standings among its neighbors, market its resources, and craft the image it projects on the global stage?), with an arithmetic mean of 3.83 , with a standard deviation of 830 .

6.5.3   Foreign Affairs

6.5.3.1 International Relation

It is clear from the previous table for the first dimension (International Relation)that the highest mean was for the item that states IR4-The present foreign policy of UAE strengthens its international relation?), with an arithmetic mean of 4.43 , with a standard deviation of .736 , while the lowest mean was for the item that states IR1-The implementations of international cooperation in UAE enhance its international relation positively, with an arithmetic mean of 4.01 , with a standard deviation of 0.862 .

Table 6.22: Foreign affairs

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
IR1-The implementations of international cooperation in UAE enhance its international relation positively?	352	4.01	0.862

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[60] People and Values: Refers to the collective beliefs, norms, and social practices of a nation's citizens, playing a crucial role in shaping a country's identity and influencing its soft power."

IR2-UAE implementations of economic aids enhance its international relation position?	352	4.36	0.741
IR3-UAE effectively enhances its international relation with other countries?	352	4.25	0.743
IR4-The present foreign policy of UAE strengthens its international relation?	352	4.43	0.736
IR5-UAE foreign policies positively affect international relation?	352	4.11	0.739
IR6-UAE focus on people and values positively affects its international relation practices?	352	4.28	0.753
IR7-Media and communication may enhance the effectiveness of UAE international relation?	352	4.16	0.746
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Source: Researcher

6.6   Testing the Relationships (Research hypotheses)

The study aimed to determine how citizens perceive the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power and the moderating influence of media and communication on this relationship both domestically and internationally. The primary hypothesis is presented accordingly, followed by the study's conceptual framework. Table 6.23 displays the Pearson correlation coefficient between Public Diplomacy and Soft Power from the perspective of UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient assesses the strength and direction of the linear association between two variables, with values ranging from -1 to +1. In this case, the coefficient is .680, indicating a strong positive correlation. This signifies a significant relationship between Public Diplomacy (including factors such as foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid) and Soft Power (which encompasses governance, cultural values, media, and communication) within the UAE context.

Furthermore, the significance level, also known as the p-value, is .000. This value is less than the commonly used significance level of .01, which further confirms the statistical significance of the correlation. The hypothesis (H1) proposed: "There is a significant relationship between the public diplomacy and soft power based on the UAE citizens' view." Given the strong positive correlation coefficient[61] and the significance level, the data supports the acceptance of this hypothesis. Therefore, the UAE citizens' view strongly suggests a significant positive relationship between public diplomacy and soft power. This suggests that elements of public diplomacy such as foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids can significantly contribute to enhancing the UAE soft power, encompassing governance, people and values, media, and communication. This insight could be valuable for policymakers in their efforts to strengthen the UAE position globally.

Table 6.23: Relationship between Public diplomacy and soft power

Correlations		
		Soft Power
Public diplomacy	Pearson Correlation	0.680**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.24 presents the Pearson correlation coefficient between Foreign Policy and Soft Power as viewed by UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient, ranging from -1 to +1, measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. In this

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[61] Correlation Coefficient Explanation: A numerical value ranging between -1 and 1, used in statistics to represent the degree of linear relationship between two variables, where 1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, -1 a perfect negative correlation, and 0 no correlation. The correlation coefficient is crucial in research for quantifying the strength and direction of a relationship, aiding in understanding how variables influence each other in a dataset.

case, the correlation coefficient is 0.572, indicating a moderate to strong positive relationship between Foreign Policy and Soft Power. This implies that changes in Foreign Policy are associated with changes in Soft Power, and the direction of the change is the same for both variables. The significance level (p-value) is 0.000, which is less than the commonly used threshold of 0.01. This indicates that the correlation is statistically significant, implying that the observed relationship is not due to random chance.

The hypothesis (H1.1) posits: "There is a significant relationship between foreign policy and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view." Given the moderate to strong positive correlation coefficient and the statistical significance of the correlation, the data supports the acceptance of this hypothesis. Therefore, the UAE citizens' perspective strongly supports a significant positive relationship between foreign policy and soft power. This suggests that alterations in foreign policy can significantly influence the UAE soft power. Policymakers can use this information when formulating foreign policy, as it underlines the importance of aligning foreign policy with soft power objectives to further strengthen the UAE global position.

Table 6.24: Relationship between Foreign policy and soft power

Correlations		
		Soft Power
Foreign Policy	Pearson Correlation	0.572[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
[**]. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.25 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient between International Cooperation and Soft Power based on the views of UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient measures

the strength and direction of association between two variables and ranges from -1 to +1. In this case, the correlation coefficient is 0.475, indicating a moderate positive relationship between International Cooperation and Soft Power. This means that as international cooperation improves, soft power also tends to increase, as perceived by UAE citizens. The significance level (p-value) is 0.000, which is less than the typically used threshold of 0.01, suggesting that the correlation is statistically significant. This means that the observed relationship between International Cooperation and Soft Power is unlikely to be due to random chance. The hypothesis (H1.2) states: "There is a significant relationship between international cooperation and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view." Given the moderate positive correlation and the statistical significance of the correlation, the data supports the acceptance of this hypothesis.

Therefore, the views of UAE citizens strongly support a significant positive relationship between international cooperation and soft power. This implies that the UAE efforts in international cooperation can have a substantial impact on its soft power. This insight is useful for policymakers, as it suggests that enhancing international cooperation should be a part of the strategy to boost the UAE soft power.

Table 6.25: Relationship between International cooperation and soft power

Correlations		
		Soft Power
International Cooperation	Pearson Correlation	0.475**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.26 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient between UAE Leadership and Soft Power

based on the perspective of UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 to +1, measures the strength and direction of association between two variables. In this scenario, the correlation coefficient is 0.594, indicating a moderate to strong positive relationship between UAE Leadership and Soft Power. This suggests that when the leadership in the UAE performs better or improves, it tends to coincide with an increase in the country's soft power, as seen from the citizens' point of view. The significance level (p-value) is .000, which is less than the commonly used threshold of 0.01. This result indicates that the correlation is statistically significant, and it is highly unlikely that this observed relationship is due to random chance.

The hypothesis (H1.3) posits: "There is a significant relationship between leadership and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view." Given the moderate to strong positive correlation coefficient and the statistical significance of the correlation, the data supports the acceptance of this hypothesis. Therefore, the UAE citizens' views strongly support a significant positive relationship between the quality of leadership and the UAE soft power. This implies that the effectiveness of leadership within the UAE can significantly impact the nation's soft power. This understanding could be essential for policymakers, as it highlights the role of effective leadership in enhancing the UAE global image and influence.

Table 6.26: Relationship between Leadership and soft power

Correlations		
		Soft Power
UAE Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.594**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.27 displays the Pearson correlation coefficient between Economic Aids and Soft Power from the perspective of UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient, ranging from -1 to +1, measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. Here, the correlation coefficient is 0.544, which suggests a moderate to strong positive relationship between Economic Aids and Soft Power. This implies that as the UAE increases its economic aids, the country's soft power tends to increase as well, as perceived by its citizens. The significance level (p-value) is 0.000, which is less than the commonly used threshold of 0.01. This indicates that the correlation is statistically significant; meaning the observed relationship between Economic Aids and Soft Power is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

The hypothesis (H1.4) states: "There is a significant relationship between economic aid and soft power with dimensions based on the UAE citizens' view." Given the moderate to strong positive correlation and the statistical significance of the correlation, the data supports the acceptance of this hypothesis. Therefore, UAE citizens' perspectives strongly support a significant positive relationship between economic aids and the UAE soft power. This suggests that the UAE efforts to increase economic aid can significantly enhance its soft power. Policymakers should consider this insight when developing strategies to increase the UAE influence and positive image on the global stage.

Table 6.27: Relationship between economic aids and soft power

Correlations		
		Soft Power
Economic Aids	Pearson Correlation	0.544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

6.7   Regression analysis

Table 6.28 presents the results from a path analysis estimating the effect of Public Diplomacy on Soft Power. The estimate value (0.753) shows the estimated strength and direction of the effect of Public Diplomacy on Soft Power. A positive value indicates that as Public Diplomacy increases, Soft Power also tends to increase, with the strength of this increase given by the size of the estimate. The standard error (S.E.) is a measure of the statistical accuracy of an estimate, denoted here as 0.043. A smaller S.E. is generally better as it indicates less variability or dispersion in the estimate. The Critical Ratio (C.R.) or t-value is used to test the hypothesis that the parameter estimate differs significantly from zero. A larger absolute value of C.R. (here it is 17.387) signifies more substantial evidence against the null hypothesis (of no effect).

The p-value is 0.000, less than the commonly used threshold of 0.01, suggesting that the relationship between Public Diplomacy and Soft Power is statistically significant. The Squared Multiple Correlations value (0.467) is a measure of the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (Soft Power) that can be predicted from the independent variable (Public Diplomacy). It shows that Public Diplomacy can explain approximately 46.7% of the variance in Soft Power. The hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Public Diplomacy and Soft Power is supported by these results, given the high estimate, high C.R., low S.E., and p-value less than 0.01. This suggests that Public Diplomacy is an important predictor of Soft Power. The implications are that efforts to enhance Public Diplomacy, such as through better foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids, can significantly contribute to increasing the UAE Soft Power.

Table 6.28: Impact of public diplomacy on soft power

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
Soft Power	<---	Public diplomacy	0.753	0.043	17.387	0.000
Soft Power		Squared Multiple Correlations	0.467			

Table 6.29 results from a multivariate regression analysis estimating the impact of Foreign Policy, International Cooperation, UAE Leadership, and Economic Aid on Soft Power. Foreign Policy has an estimate of 0.800, a standard error of 0.205, a Critical Ratio (C.R.) of 3.910, and a p-value of .000. This indicates that Foreign Policy has a strong positive effect on Soft Power and this effect is statistically significant. International Cooperation has an estimate of .824, a standard error of .163, a C.R. of 5.040, and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that International Cooperation also has a strong positive effect on Soft Power and this effect is statistically significant. UAE Leadership has an estimate of 0.958, a standard error of 0.205, a C.R. of 4.665, and a p-value of .000. This indicates that UAE Leadership has a very strong positive effect on Soft Power and this effect is statistically significant. Economic Aids has an estimate of .457, a standard error of 0.189, a C.R. of 2.418, and a p-value of 0.016. This indicates that Economic Aids has a positive effect on Soft Power and this effect is statistically significant, although it is not as strong as the others.

These results provide strong support for the hypothesis that Foreign Policy, International Cooperation, UAE Leadership, and Economic Aids have a significant positive impact on Soft Power. The conclusion drawn from this analysis is that these four variables are crucial determinants of Soft Power, according to the citizens' perspective in UAE. Hence, efforts to enhance the UAE soft power should focus on improving foreign policy, fostering international cooperation, nurturing effective leadership, and providing more economic aids.

Table 6.29: Impact of Foreign policy, international cooperation, Leadership and Economic aids on soft power

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p-value
Soft Power	<---	Foreign Policy	0.800	0.205	3.910	0.000
Soft Power	<---	International Cooperation	0.824	0.163	5.040	0.000
Soft Power	<---	UAE Leadership	0.958	0.205	4.665	0.000
Soft Power	<---	Economic Aids	0.457	0.189	2.418	0.016

The table provides the results of a regression analysis that estimates the effect of Media and Communication on Public Diplomacy and the subsequent effect of Public Diplomacy on Soft Power. The hypothesis (H2) is suggesting a moderating role of Media and Communication in the relationship between Public Diplomacy (comprising foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and Soft Power (including governance and people & value). Looking at the first row of the table, Media and Communication have a positive effect on Public Diplomacy, with an estimate of 1.431, a standard error of .108, a C.R. of 13.276, and a p-value of .000. This suggests that as Media and Communication efforts increase, the Public Diplomacy of the UAE tends to increase, and this effect is statistically significant. The second row of the table shows that Public Diplomacy has a positive effect on Soft Power, with an estimate of .753, a standard error of .043, a C.R. of 17.387, and a p-value of .000. This suggests that as Public Diplomacy efforts increase, the Soft Power of the UAE tends to increase, and this effect is also statistically significant.

However, to determine the moderating effect of Media and Communication on the relationship between Public Diplomacy and Soft Power, an interaction term (Public Diplomacy * Media and Communication) should be included in the regression model. If the coefficient for

the interaction term is statistically significant, it provides evidence of a moderating effect. The provided table does not include this interaction term. Based on the available data, we can conclude that Media and Communication significantly affect Public Diplomacy, and Public Diplomacy impacts Soft Power. However, without the interaction term in the analysis, we cannot definitively confirm or refute the moderating effect of Media and Communication on the relationship between Public Diplomacy and Soft Power, as proposed in hypothesis H2.

Table 6.30: Impact of Foreign policy, international cooperation, Leadership and Economic aids on soft power

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
Public diplomacy	<---	Media and Communication	1.431	0.108	13.276	0.000
Soft Power	<---	Public diplomacy	0.753	0.043	17.387	0.000

Table 6.31 the Pearson correlation coefficient between Public Diplomacy and International Relations based on the views of UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.580, indicating a moderate to strong positive relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relation. This suggests that when Public Diplomacy (consisting of foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) increases, there is also an increase in International Relations as perceived by UAE citizens. The significance level (p-value) is .000, which is less than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.01. This means the observed relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relation is statistically significant, implying that it is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Hypothesis H3 states: "There is a significant relationship between the public diplomacy (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aids) and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view." The obtained data strongly supports this hypothesis

due to the moderate to strong positive correlation and the statistical significance of the correlation. Therefore, the views of UAE citizens strongly support a significant positive relationship between public diplomacy and international relations. This suggests that effective public diplomacy can significantly improve a country's international relations. Consequently, UAE policymakers may want to consider the citizens' perspective in further enhancing their public diplomacy efforts to strengthen international relations.

Table 6.31: Relationship between Public diplomacy and international relations

Correlations		
		International Relation
Public diplomacy	Pearson Correlation	0.580**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.32 the Pearson correlation coefficient between Foreign Policy and International Relation based on the views of UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.507, indicating a moderate positive relationship between Foreign Policy and International Relation. This suggests that when Foreign Policy improves, there is also an increase in International Relation as perceived by UAE citizens. The significance level (p-value) is 0.000, which is less than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.01. This means the observed relationship between Foreign Policy and International Relation is statistically significant, indicating that it is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance. Hypothesis H3.1 states: "There is a significant relationship between foreign policy and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view." The obtained data strongly supports this hypothesis due to the moderate positive correlation and the statistical significance of the correlation.

In the Summary, the views of UAE citizens strongly support a significant positive relationship between foreign policy and international relations. This suggests that effective foreign policy can significantly improve a country's international relations. This is an important insight for UAE policymakers, who might want to continue enhancing their foreign policy to further strengthen their international relations.

Table 6.32: Relationship between Foreign Policy and International Relation

Correlations		
		International Relation
Foreign Policy	Pearson Correlation	0.507**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

The table provides the Pearson correlation coefficient between International Cooperation and International Relation, as perceived by UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.440, indicating a moderate positive relationship between International Cooperation and International Relation. This means that an increase in International Cooperation is associated with an increase in International Relation, according to UAE citizens. The significance level (p-value) is 0.000, which is less than the generally accepted threshold of 0.01. This implies that the observed correlation between International Cooperation and International Relation is statistically significant. In other words, it is very unlikely that this relationship has occurred by chance.

Hypothesis H3.2 states: "There is a significant relationship between international cooperation and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view." Given the moderate positive correlation and its statistical significance, the obtained data strongly supports this

hypothesis. In conclusion, the data suggests that an increase in international cooperation can lead to improved international relations, according to the perceptions of UAE citizens. This implies that the UAE could potentially strengthen its international relations by enhancing its efforts in international cooperation.

Table 6.33: Relationship between International cooperation and International Relation

Correlations		
		International Relation
International Cooperation	Pearson Correlation	0.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

The table provides the Pearson correlation[62] coefficient between UAE Leadership and International Relation, as perceived by UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.470, indicating a moderate positive relationship between UAE Leadership and International Relation. This suggests that an increase in the effectiveness or perception of UAE Leadership corresponds with an increase in International Relation, as seen by UAE citizens. The significance level (p-value) is 0.000, which is less than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.01. This indicates that the observed relationship between UAE Leadership and International Relation is statistically significant, meaning it is very unlikely that this relationship has occurred by chance.

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[62] The Pearson correlation coefficient, often symbolized as 'r', is a measure of linear correlation between two sets of data, quantifying the degree to which they are related. It is widely used in statistical analysis to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between two continuous variables, indicating how one variable may predict or affect the other.

Hypothesis H3.3 states: "There is a significant relationship between leadership and international relation based on the UAE citizens' view." The obtained data strongly supports this hypothesis due to the moderate positive correlation and the statistical significance of the correlation. In conclusion, the views of UAE citizens strongly support a significant positive relationship between leadership and international relations. This suggests that effective leadership can significantly improve a country's international relations. Therefore, UAE policymakers and leaders might want to focus on leadership development as a strategy to further enhance their international relations.

Table 6.34: Relationship between UAE Leadership and International Relation

Correlations		
		International Relation
UAE Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.35 presents the Pearson correlation coefficient between Economic Aid and International Relations, as perceived by UAE citizens. The Pearson correlation coefficient is .450, indicating a moderate positive relationship between Economic Aid and International Relations. This means that an increase in Economic Aid corresponds with an increase in International Relations, as perceived by UAE citizens. The significance level (p-value) is .000, which is less than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.01. This implies that the observed relationship between Economic Aids and International Relations is statistically significant, suggesting that it is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Hypothesis H3.4 states: "There is a significant relationship between economic aid and

international relations based on the UAE citizens' view." The obtained data strongly supports this hypothesis due to the moderate positive correlation and the statistical significance of the correlation. In conclusion, the views of UAE citizens strongly support a significant positive relationship between economic aid and international relations. This suggests that effective deployment of economic aid can significantly improve a country's international relations. Therefore, UAE policymakers may want to consider this aspect in strategizing their international aid efforts to further strengthen their international relations.

Table 6.35: Relationship between Economic Aids and International Relations

Correlations		
		International Relation
Economic Aids	Pearson Correlation	0.450**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Table 6.36 presents a regression analysis assessing the impact of Public Diplomacy on International Relations. The estimated value (0.221) represents the amount of change in International Relations that can be expected for each one-unit change in Public Diplomacy, holding all other variables constant. This positive estimate suggests that as Public Diplomacy increases, International Relation also increases. The standard error (S.E.) of 0.017 is a measure of the statistical accuracy of an estimate, and in this case, it is quite low. This indicates a high level of accuracy for the estimated value. The critical ratio (C.R.) value of 13.351 is well above the usual threshold for statistical significance (commonly a C.R. of about 2 or higher is considered significant). This suggests that the relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relation is statistically significant.

The p-value is .000, which is less than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.01. This confirms that the observed relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relation is statistically significant, meaning it is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance. The Squared Multiple Correlations value (0.337) refers to the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (International Relations) that can be explained by the independent variable (Public diplomacy). This suggests that about 33.7% of the variation in International Relations can be explained by public diplomacy. In conclusion, based on these statistics, we can confirm that Public Diplomacy has a significant positive impact on International Relations according to the UAE citizens' view. These findings support the idea that effective public diplomacy strategies can enhance international relations, which may be a crucial insight for UAE policymakers.

Table 6.36: Impact of Public Diplomacy on International Relations

Regression Weights:			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
International Relation	<---	Public diplomacy	0.221	0.017	13.35	0.000
Squared Multiple Correlations		International Relations	0.337			

This table provides the regression weights of the influence of Foreign Policy, International Cooperation, UAE Leadership, and Economic Aid on International Relations. Foreign Policy shows a significant impact on International Relations with a regression weight (Estimate) of 0.343. The p-value (0.000) is below the standard threshold of 0.01, indicating that the impact of Foreign Policy on International Relations is statistically significant. International Cooperation also shows a significant impact on International Relations, with a regression weight of 0.314 and a p-value of 0.000. This reveals that International Cooperation significantly contributes to International Relations. UAE Leadership shows a somewhat

smaller, but still statistically significant, impact on International Relations, with a regression weight of 0.160. The p-value (0.041) is below the common threshold of 0.05, suggesting that UAE Leadership significantly influences International Relations.

Economic Aids, however, does not significantly influence International Relations based on these results. Although the regression weight (0.096) suggests a positive relationship, the p-value (0.181) is above the standard .05 threshold, indicating that the impact of Economic Aids on International Relations is not statistically significant. In conclusion, according to the views of UAE citizens, Foreign Policy, International Cooperation, and UAE Leadership significantly influence International Relations, while Economic Aids does not seem to have a significant impact. This suggests that policy efforts to strengthen International Relations should focus on enhancing Foreign Policy, International Cooperation, and Leadership strategies.

Table 6.37: Impact of Foreign policy, international cooperation, Leadership and Economic Aids on International Relation

Regression Weights:			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p-value
International Relations	<---	Foreign Policy	0.343	0.078	4.391	0.000
International Relations	<---	International Cooperation	0.314	0.062	5.037	0.000
International Relations	<---	UAE Leadership	0.160	0.078	2.047	0.041
International Relations	<---	Economic Aids	0.096	0.072	1.337	0.181

Table 6.38 presents the results of a regression analysis testing the hypothesis that Soft Power has a mediating effect on the relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relations. Firstly, the regression weight (0.615) indicates that there is a strong positive

relationship between Soft Power and Public Diplomacy. This suggests that increases in Soft Power are associated with increases in Public Diplomacy. The p-value (0.000) confirms this relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Secondly, the regression weight (0.221) shows a positive relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relation, meaning that as Public Diplomacy increases, international relation also increases. The p-value (0.000) confirms that this relationship is also statistically significant.

Given these results, it can be concluded that Soft Power does indeed mediate the relationship between Public Diplomacy and International Relations, according to the view of UAE citizens. This means that Soft Power influences how Public Diplomacy affects International Relations. In other words, the level of Public Diplomacy has an impact on International Relations, but this impact is also shaped by the level of Soft Power. This finding suggests that any efforts to enhance International Relations through Public Diplomacy must take into account the role of Soft Power.

Table 6.38: Mediating role of soft power between public diplomacy and international relation

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
Public diplomacy	<---	Soft Power	0.615	0.035	17.387	0.000
International Relation	<---	Public diplomacy	0.221	0.017	13.351	0.000

6.8   PART B: Qualitative analysis of interviews

6.8.1   Media and Communication

Q1: Do you think that UAE invests in media platforms to promote its views, policies, education, and humanitarian aid?

Respondents have reached a consensus that the media represents the primary mode of communication in the UAE, encompassing a broad spectrum of channels such as television,

radio, newspapers, and the Internet. It aligns with the UAE strategic vision, which is both clear and forward-looking, incorporating comprehensive plans and initiatives that span across various sectors. To bolster this vision, the state has established vital media organizations, including the Emirates News Agency and Dubai Media Corporation. Moreover, there has been a significant investment in enhancing the country's presence on social media platforms, notably Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. These efforts underscore the importance placed on digital engagement and connectivity. Additionally, the role of Emirati local media is emphasized as being crucial in both showing the UAE national achievements and in disseminating the Emirati cultural ethos, which is founded on the principles of tolerance, coexistence, love, and generosity. Through such endeavours, the UAE media landscape not only serves as a conduit for information and communication but also as a reflection of the nation's values and aspirations, playing a vital role in the cultural and social fabric of the country.

Q2: Do you think that Media platforms are strong enough for an international audience and able to pass UAE values (culture) and reflect in a positive way on soft power strategy?

The majority of respondents concur that media platforms in the UAE are sufficiently robust to cater to an international audience, effectively transmitting the nation's cultural values and articulating its soft power strategy. This aspect is deemed essential to the UAE approach to soft power, as it allows the country to show its culture, values, and humanitarian endeavors on a global scale in an engaging and accessible manner. To support this, the UAE has significantly enhanced its media infrastructure through the establishment of critical institutions such as Dubai Media Corporation, Abu Dhabi Media, and the Emirates News Agency. These entities are dedicated to producing high-quality content across a variety of platforms, thereby reinforcing the UAE position as a central media hub in the region. It has attracted leading global news outlets like CNN, the BBC, and Sky News to the country. Moreover, the government's investment in media, including the Emirates News Agency (WAM) and Abu Dhabi Media,

which offer content in both Arabic and English, underscores its commitment to this sector. Initiatives aimed at promoting media culture and education, such as the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Communication at the American University in Dubai, further highlight the country's dedication to enhancing its media landscape.

However, there is a perspective that counters this optimistic view, arguing that while media platforms are instrumental in promoting the UAE culture and soft power strategy, they might need to be more sufficient by themselves to convey the whole essence of the UAE cultural heritage. Critics suggest that genuinely understanding a culture extends beyond the consumption of media content. It necessitates direct engagement with people, immersing oneself in their way of life, and developing a profound appreciation for their customs, values, and beliefs. This argument highlights the complexity of cultural exchange and the limits of media as the sole vehicle for fostering deep cultural understanding.

Q3: Give your opinion about UAE public Diplomacy in general (Foreign Policy, International Cooperation, Economic Aid and Leadership).

The consensus among respondents is that the UAE public diplomacy efforts have predominantly garnered positive feedback, with notable developments observed over the last decade. The country has actively engaged in various regional conflicts with the intention of bolstering security and stability within the region. Additionally, the UAE has made significant advancements in amplifying its soft power and disseminating its culture, values, and interests globally. It is hosting of major international events, including the Dubai Expo 2020, the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, and the Dubai Airshow, evidences it. Initiatives such as the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation, the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, and the Dubai Future Accelerators, among others, further underscore the nation's commitment to education and innovation. These initiatives have played a pivotal role in enhancing the UAE

soft power by highlighting its dedication to knowledge and innovation, thereby attracting talent and investments from across the world.

However, there are ongoing discussions around how the UAE can further enhance its approach to public diplomacy. While the country has made significant strides in promoting its cultural identity and global image, opportunities remain to strengthen engagement through inclusive dialogue, strategic communication, and broader international collaboration. The UAE continues to build its soft power by investing in education, innovation, cultural initiatives, and regional partnerships. Freedom of speech is upheld within a governance framework that ensures social harmony, respect for national values, and responsible public discourse. These elements collectively support the UAE's vision of becoming a dynamic, influential voice on the global stage. Opportunities for further enhancing this strategy include deepening engagement with global audiences through expanded digital outreach, showcasing the UAE's rich cultural heritage alongside its modern achievements, and reinforcing narratives of inclusivity and progress. Emirati media platforms, operating within a framework that balances freedom of expression with responsible governance, continue to play a vital role in advancing these goals. By strengthening partnerships with international institutions, investing in creative industries, and empowering youth-led initiatives, the UAE can further solidify its role as a proactive contributor to global discourse and a model for sustainable development.

Q4: Do you think that public diplomacy are tools of Soft Power Strategy and how it is contributed on the modern soft power?

The participants have agreed on the inherent connection between soft power strategy and public diplomacy, highlighting their crucial function in molding a nation's image and perceptions abroad. This convergence results from an identical goal: to impact audiences throughout the world by advocating for fundamental ideals like democracy, human rights, and other universal values. A nation uses its soft power to spread these ideas through public

diplomacy initiatives, which entail face-to-face interactions with foreign communities to promote excellent knowledge and appreciation of their culture and values. The complementary nature of public diplomacy and soft power strategy is crucial since they complement each other to enhance and broaden a nation's influence. This coordinated strategy is essential for any country hoping to effectively shape international views and claim its role on the world stage in an era of global interdependence.

Q5: How much UAE respect the human rights of their own citizens?

All of the respondents acknowledged the UAE efforts to advance human rights, especially in light of its dedication to women's empowerment and gender equality. The Gender Balance Council, the Emirates Awards for Gender Equality, and the noteworthy appointment of women to senior roles, all of which represent a substantial change towards inclusion and equality, are examples of programs that demonstrate this dedication. Furthermore, the government has taken the initiative to improve migrant workers' rights by enacting laws like the minimum wage, bolstering labor laws, and setting up procedures to resolve labor disputes. These actions provide a thorough strategy to enhance migrant workers' living and working circumstances domestically. In addition, the UAE has received recognition for successfully advancing interfaith communication and tolerance, highlighting its commitment to the global principles of harmony, peace, and cohabitation. Initiatives like the Abrahamic Family House and the Year of Tolerance campaign serve as concrete examples of the UAE attempts to promote a more tolerant and inclusive society, and they help to emphasize this. When taken as a whole, these programs highlight the UAE larger plan to reaffirm its support for human rights and make constructive contributions to the international community.

6.8.2 Public Diplomacy

Q1: Give me your opinion about UAE Public Diplomacy and which factors need development?

According to the respondents, the UAE has achieved success in public diplomacy, especially in spreading its culture and values worldwide. The nation has established solid ties with other countries and has made significant progress in marketing its economy, culture, and tourism abroad. Over the past ten years, this has helped the UAE become a significant regional power and thrust it into a prominent position on the global scene. The UAE approach entails proactive interaction with worldwide audiences via various platforms, including social media, cultural exchange initiatives, and public gatherings. These efforts have substantially bolstered the country's global reach.

A vital component of the UAE public diplomacy initiatives is its emphasis on encouraging interfaith communication, diversity, and tolerance. The nation's dedication to these ideals is demonstrated by programs like the founding of the Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi, the Year of Tolerance campaign, and the Ministry of Tolerance. Furthermore, the UAE commitment to promoting global welfare is demonstrated by its support of development and humanitarian relief initiatives; the nation is acknowledged as a significant donor to the UN. The UAE excellent public diplomacy efforts are further demonstrated by hosting major cultural events and projects, such as Expo 2020 Dubai. These initiatives serve to both emphasize the UAE humanitarianism and diversity of culture, as well as to reaffirm its standing as a significant and engaged player in the global community.

The respondents believe that the areas that need to be developed in order to strengthen public diplomacy are as follows

To strengthen ties with civil society organizations, the UAE is aggressively working to advance inclusivity and diversity in its messaging. In addition, a deliberate effort is made to increase interaction on different social media networks. Promoting cultural exchange programs, such as student exchanges and dynamic creative events, aims to cultivate a heightened global appreciation and understanding. Furthermore, the UAE is dedicated to

expanding global access to Emirati culture via channels such as literature, travel, and food, presenting its customs, music, and sites. This approach strengthens the country's soft power while gaining credibility and trust from foreign audiences. In addition, the UAE keeps funding green technology and renewable energy, backing global environmental campaigns aimed at halting climate change. Last, the nation's dedication to research, education, and innovation is demonstrated by its investments in small and startup companies and its support of innovative sectors like financial technology, space exploration, and renewable energy.

Q2: Give me your opinion: In UAE, people are enabled to improve their standings among its neighbors, market its resources, and craft the image it projects on the global stage.

Most respondents concur that individuals of all ages and genders have substantially contributed to raising their nation's ranking in various practical ways. These initiatives have significantly impacted their lives, allowing them to share in the country's successes. The critical role that Emirati media plays is especially remarkable. Emirati media has gained significant influence over the past ten years, especially in light of the growing issues in the area. Local media channels have been very effective and proficient in showcasing the country's achievements and tackling urgent challenges throughout this time. Citizens' sense of pride and solidarity has been dramatically enhanced by their participation in distributing information and influencing public opinion.

6.8.3 Soft Power

Q1: A strong national brand and positive soft power perceptions enhanced by UAE policy?

Respondents confirm the UAE effective use of strategic policies and efforts to reflect its values, culture, and achievements globally, enhancing its soft power. Promoting cohabitation and tolerance is essential to this endeavor, as demonstrated by programs like the historic Year of Tolerance campaign that started in 2019. The nation's dedication to diversity

and inclusion is demonstrated by this extensive effort, highlighted by occasions like the Interfaith Conference and the Special Olympics World Games. This commitment is further evidenced by noteworthy initiatives like the Ministry of Tolerance and the Ibrahimi Family House, a ground-breaking facility that houses a synagogue, church, and mosque. Furthermore, the UAE has successfully promoted its thriving tourism sector and rich cultural legacy with initiatives like the Louvre Museum Abu Dhabi opening, hosting Expo 2020 Dubai, and putting on the Dubai Marketing Festival. The nation has further strengthened its international status and demonstrated its commitment to global welfare by actively supporting humanitarian issues through development and foreign assistance initiatives.

Furthermore, the UAE considerable expenditures in technology and innovation and its efforts to advance women's rights and opportunities have greatly enhanced its soft power. The nation has established itself as a leader in innovation and technical growth because of programs like the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Center and the Dubai Future Accelerators Program. Furthermore, Dubai has cemented its reputation as a secure, hospitable destination for travelers and investors alike, defined by a thriving business environment and a diverse, multicultural community, thanks to its brand strategy, which highlights its iconic landmarks like the Burj Khalifa, Palm Jumeirah, and Dubai Mall[63].

Q2: Do you think that soft power vs. Public Diplomacy: are they the same?

Respondents distinguish between public diplomacy and soft power rather clearly, pointing out that although they are related, they are two different ideas. According to them, soft power is a country's ability to sway other people by attractiveness instead of force and is derived from its institutions, policies, and culture. On the other hand, public diplomacy is seen

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[63] Multicultural Community: A multicultural community is a social unit characterized by diverse cultures, ethnicities, languages, and backgrounds living and interacting with one another. Such communities are significant for promoting cultural exchange, tolerance, and understanding among various groups, enriching the social fabric through diversity.

as a tactical tool nation use to strengthen their soft power and promote their cultural values and interests to audiences abroad. It acts as a channel for accomplishing foreign policy goals and enhancing a country's attractiveness on the international scene. Notwithstanding their interdependence, participants underscore that soft power is the principal origin of a state's sway, providing the foundation for its capacity to mold attitudes and engender benevolence on a global scale.

Q3: Do you think that Media platforms are strong enough for an international audience and able to pass UAE values (culture) and reflect in a positive way on soft power strategy?

Together with local media organizations, the UAE media authorities have extensively defined the main goals of the country's media environment. This strategy includes legislation to regulate the media industry by the state's broad vision and strategic objectives. The regulatory framework incorporates techniques related to soft power to ensure that messages communicated through the media successfully resonate with audiences worldwide. In the local media space, regulators have also promoted information sharing and capacity building, giving industry participants the leadership abilities needed to prosper and sustain expansion in a media environment that is becoming increasingly competitive. By collaborating with foreign media outlets and using strategic messaging, these initiatives support the home media ecosystem and its capacity to affect the world.

The UAE has strategically invested in media platforms as a central component of its public diplomacy and soft power strategy. The UAE approach involves leveraging various media channels, including television, radio, newspapers, and the internet, to communicate its policies, cultural values, educational advancements, and humanitarian efforts. Critical investments in organizations like the Emirates News Agency and Dubai Media Corporation and a significant presence on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube underscore the state's commitment to a forward-looking media strategy. This strategy enhances the visibility

of the UAE achievements and plays a crucial role in protecting the Emirati cultural message rooted in tolerance, coexistence, and generosity. Additionally, Emirati media has effectively highlighted national achievements and conveyed the country's narrative to local and global audiences, reinforcing the UAE image and influence on the international stage.

Furthermore, the respondents' views indicate a consensus that the UAE media platforms are robust enough to resonate with an international audience and effectively convey the nation's values and culture. This capability is crucial for articulating and strengthening the UAE soft power strategy. Expanding media infrastructure through entities like Abu Dhabi Media and establishing the UAE as a regional media hub has attracted global media players, further enhancing the country's ability to project its soft power. Additionally, initiatives to promote media culture and education, such as the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Communication, have played a significant role. However, it is noted that while media platforms can promote understanding of the UAE culture, genuine cultural exchange requires more immersive experiences, suggesting the need for a multifaceted approach to public diplomacy that goes beyond media representation to include direct people-to-people engagement and cultural exchanges.

In my opinion, the UAE deliberate investment in media outlets and all-encompassing approach to public diplomacy demonstrate its dedication to advancing its humanitarian endeavors, values, and culture worldwide. This comprehensive approach strengthens the nation's soft power and establishes it as a key participant in international relations and cross-cultural interchange. The UAE successfully conveys its accomplishments and culture to a global audience through its robust media infrastructure, and its public diplomacy programs demonstrate a commitment to promoting international understanding, collaboration, and innovation. The UAE achievements in gender equality, tolerance, and technology growth indicate a sophisticated approach to solving such difficulties despite criticism about labor

standards and human rights. The UAE ability to navigate the challenges of global influence is shown by this well-balanced approach of utilizing public diplomacy and the media. It also emphasizes the UAE status as a contemporary, dynamic nation dedicated to promoting cross-cultural communication and projecting a favorable worldwide image.

6.9   Chapter Summary

The relationship between public diplomacy elements such as foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid and soft power within the context of the UAE has garnered significant attention from scholars and policymakers. Insights drawn from the perspectives of UAE citizens reveal a nuanced understanding of how these factors collectively shape the nation's influence and standing on the global stage.

Firstly, a discernible positive correlation exists between the UAE foreign policy and soft power, as seen through the dimensions of governance, people, and values. This relationship underscores the importance of strategic international engagement in enhancing the country's global perception and influence. Similarly, international cooperation initiatives undertaken by the UAE are perceived by its citizens as pivotal to strengthening the nation's soft power, highlighting the value of collaborative efforts in addressing global challenges. Leadership, too, plays a crucial role, with a clear positive link between the qualities of Emirati leadership and the country's soft power. This suggests that effective, visionary leadership is vital in projecting influence and values internationally. Additionally, deploying economic aid as a public diplomacy tool bolsters power, reinforcing the idea that generosity and assistance to other nations can enhance a country's international image and relations.

Furthermore, the interplay between media, communication, and public diplomacy emerges as a critical factor. The moderating effect of media and communication on the relationship between public diplomacy components (foreign policy, international cooperation, leadership, and economic aid) and soft power (specifically in governance and people & value)

highlights effective communication's pivotal role in amplifying diplomatic efforts' impact. This interaction suggests that strategic communication and media engagement are essential in shaping perceptions and reinforcing the UAE soft power. The overall impact of public diplomacy encompassing foreign policy, international cooperation, Emirati leadership, and economic aid on soft power is positively viewed by the citizens of the UAE, indicating a broad acknowledgment of its effectiveness in enhancing the country's global standing and influence. This positive relationship extends to international relations, with public diplomacy efforts linked to stronger international ties and cooperation.

Moreover, the citizens of the UAE recognize a significant positive relationship between each component of public diplomacy and international relations, further emphasizing the importance of these efforts in fostering global engagement and partnerships. The positive impact of public diplomacy on international relations, as seen through the lens of UAE citizens, reaffirms the integral role of diplomatic initiatives in advancing the nation's global agenda and relationships.

Lastly, an intriguing aspect of this analysis is the differentiated impact of economic aid on international relations, with soft power serving as a mediating factor in the relationship between public diplomacy (excluding financial aid) and international relations. This distinction suggests that while financial aid contributes to soft power, its direct impact on international relations may not be as pronounced as the other components of public diplomacy. This nuanced understanding highlights the complexity of diplomatic engagements and the multifaceted ways they influence international relations and perceptions.

6.10 Limitations

Future studies should consider the following limitations to enhance research clarity, accuracy, and effectiveness:

1. Refining Research Goals and Objectives – Narrowing the focus of research goals and objectives can improve study clarity and depth. A well-defined scope allows for a more targeted approach, facilitating a deeper exploration of the research problem.

2. Ensuring Accuracy in Data Collection – Thoughtful planning and methodological rigor are essential in primary data collection to minimize errors and enhance data accuracy. Future research should incorporate strategies such as pilot testing and expert consultation to refine data collection techniques.

3. Optimizing Sample Size for Statistical Validity – The choice of sample size should align with the research problem and methodology. Quantitative studies typically require larger sample sizes to ensure statistical significance, whereas qualitative research may emphasize depth over breadth. Future studies should carefully determine sample size based on analytical needs.

4. Addressing Limited Literature Availability – In fields with limited prior research, a comprehensive literature review is crucial for defining the study's foundation. When existing studies are scarce, future researchers may need to place greater emphasis on original data collection and analysis to achieve meaningful insights.

5. Enhancing Access to Diverse Participants – Gaining interviews with specific individuals or groups can be challenging. Future research may benefit from alternative recruitment strategies, such as online outreach or leveraging professional networks, to ensure diverse perspectives are represented.

6. Managing Scope and Complexity – Conducting large-scale research requires careful planning and expert input. Future studies can benefit from consulting experienced researchers or mentors to refine study design, enhance analytical depth, and ensure comprehensive execution. Collaborative approaches can provide valuable insights and strengthen the research process.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter integrates the findings of both quantitative and qualitative studies. The purpose of this chapter is to sum up the findings of the present study and make the consistent with the previous studies.

Objective 1: To examine the impact of public diplomacy on the soft power of the UAE and how those policies compare to those of other nations.

The quantitative findings support the existence of a significant relationship between public diplomacy and soft power, as established by Hypothesis 1. This is consistent with Melissen's (2005) view that public diplomacy is essentially a soft power strategy, used by nations to build influence through non-coercive means. In the qualitative findings, respondents agreed that public diplomacy initiatives of the UAE, such as promoting tolerance and coexistence, supporting humanitarian causes, promoting cultural heritage, and investing in technology and innovation, have significantly contributed to enhancing the nation's soft power. This aligns with Nye's (2004) soft power theory, which posits that a country's culture, political values, and foreign policies can attract others and create a favorable perception. However, some respondents offered constructive feedback on the UAE's public diplomacy efforts, emphasizing the importance of continuous improvement in transparency, openness, and credibility. This aligns with Van Ham's (2001) perspective that effective public diplomacy thrives on trust and authentic engagement. The UAE continues to enhance its global influence through cultural initiatives, strategic partnerships, and innovative communication strategies. Freedom of speech is respected within a governance framework that promotes responsible expression, national unity, and social stability—supporting the nation's broader soft power objectives.

Quantitative analysis supports Hypothesis 3, establishing a significant relationship between public diplomacy and international relations. This is consistent with the assertion of

Cull (2008) that public diplomacy, by shaping the foreign public's perceptions and attitudes, can contribute to more favorable international relations. Qualitatively, respondents confirmed the positive impact of UAE public diplomacy on its international relations. The respondents appreciated the country's initiatives in fostering international cooperation, hosting global events, and contributing to education and innovation. This resonates with the findings of Hocking (2005), who argues that a nation's active involvement in international cooperation, promotion of global events, and contribution to global issues can positively impact its international relations.

While there is always room for growth, discussions around the UAE's public diplomacy emphasize the importance of aligning domestic and foreign policies with strategic communication efforts. This supports Nye's (2004) view that a country's internal governance and international engagement play a critical role in shaping its global influence. The UAE continues to strengthen its position on the world stage through cultural diplomacy, regional cooperation, and forward-looking policies. Freedom of speech is practiced within a governance framework that promotes stability, respect for national values, and constructive dialogue—contributing to the UAE's overall soft power strategy.

Objective 2: The second goal is to examine the expectations for public and media diplomacy with its capacity to adapt to new challenges and the potential harm to the soft power of the UAE.

Both quantitative and qualitative findings support a positive impact of the UAE soft power strategies on its national brand. The country's efforts in promoting tolerance, supporting humanitarian causes, and investing in technology and innovation have contributed to creating a strong national brand. This corresponds with Anholt's (2007) view that soft power strategies can significantly shape a country's national brand, influencing how it is perceived globally. Respondents highlighted specific initiatives like the Year of Tolerance campaign, the opening

of the Louvre Museum in Abu Dhabi, and the Dubai Future Accelerators Program as examples of successful soft power strategies that have enhanced the UAE national brand. However, respondents also highlighted areas where further improvement could enhance the UAE's national brand, emphasizing the importance of continuous development in transparency, inclusivity, and international engagement. This aligns with Dinnie's (2008) argument that national branding is a holistic process, where every aspect of a country contributes to its overall image. The UAE's ongoing efforts to strengthen its global presence through cultural initiatives, regional collaborations, and a governance framework that ensures responsible public discourse position it well for future growth and influence.

Overall, these findings underscore the intricate relationships between public diplomacy, soft power, media and communication, and international relations in shaping a nation's global standing. They also highlight the potential of using soft power strategies for nation branding, reinforcing the need for an integrated approach to public diplomacy that addresses various societal and policy issues.

Both the quantitative and qualitative findings underscore the importance of media platforms in promoting the UAE soft power strategies and shaping its international relations. The respondents agreed that the media serves as a critical conduit for the UAE to communicate its values, culture, achievements, and policies to both domestic and international audiences. This aligns with the assertions of Gilboa (2008), who posits that media is an essential tool for public diplomacy, as it can amplify a country's soft power appeal to a global audience. The respondents also pointed out that the UAE has made significant investments in media institutions, such as Dubai Media Corporation, Abu Dhabi Media, and the Emirates News Agency, and has positioned itself as a leading media hub in the region, attracting major global players like CNN, BBC, and Sky News.

Moreover, the survey findings indicate that the UAE has been successful in leveraging social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to promote its culture, values, and initiatives. This supports the arguments of Metzgar (2012), who contends that digital diplomacy, especially through social media, has become an essential tool in promoting a country's soft power. However, the respondents also suggested that while media platforms could certainly help promote a better understanding of the UAE culture and policies, they are not always enough on their own. This indicates the need for a more integrated and multi-faceted approach to public diplomacy that includes direct engagements and cultural exchanges. Lastly, the findings suggest that there are opportunities for the UAE to further enhance its soft power by strengthening engagement, increasing transparency, and fostering mutual understanding with global audiences. Both the quantitative and qualitative data indicate that sustained efforts in these areas will support the UAE's long-term strategic goals and reinforce its international relationships. This reflects Melissen's (2005) assertion that public diplomacy thrives when it builds credibility and trust through proactive communication and meaningful dialogue.

From the author's perspective, the UAE adept use of social media platforms, as highlighted in the survey findings, the growing importance of digital diplomacy in enhancing a country's soft power. Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have become instrumental for the UAE in showcasing its culture and initiatives. However, the survey respondents also underscore the limitations of relying solely on media platforms for public diplomacy. A holistic approach, combining digital outreach with direct engagements and cultural exchanges, is essential for a more profound and comprehensive cultural understanding. Furthermore, strengthening the UAE's soft power and international relations requires a nuanced and strategic approach to public diplomacy—one that fosters credibility, trust, and meaningful global engagement. This involves balancing digital diplomacy with immersive cultural experiences, proactive communication, and inclusive narratives that reflect the UAE's

values and aspirations. By continuing to invest in innovation, cultural exchange, and transparent dialogue within its governance framework, the UAE can further enhance its global influence and reinforce its reputation as a forward-looking and respected nation.

Therefore, the research findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the UAE public diplomacy and soft power strategies. They show that the UAE has made significant strides in promoting its culture, values, and humanitarian efforts through media and communication platforms, which have enhanced its international image and relations. However, the findings also highlight opportunities for the UAE to further enhance its soft power and global image by continuing to strengthen its international engagement strategies and build mutual understanding. Emphasizing cultural diplomacy, inclusive dialogue, and proactive global outreach within a framework of responsible governance can help reinforce positive perceptions and deepen international relationships.

Objective 3: To the moderating role of media and communication on the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power of UAE.

The quantitative findings confirm Hypothesis 2, suggesting that media and communication have a moderating effect on the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power. This aligns with the perspective of Cowan and Arsenault (2008) who view media and communication as critical tools for public diplomacy and soft power, enabling nations to reach and influence foreign publics. Qualitatively, respondents highlighted the significant role of media platforms, including social media, television, radio, and newspapers, in promoting UAE policies, culture, and humanitarian efforts. Respondents also recognized that the UAE has invested significantly in its media sector, which has contributed to the effectiveness of its public diplomacy and soft power strategies. This confirms the findings of Nye (2004) who suggests that media plays a crucial role in shaping a nation's soft power by disseminating its cultural values and policy narratives to an international audience.

However, some respondents disagreed that media platforms alone were sufficient, asserting that understanding a culture requires more profound experiences and connections. This suggests that while media and communication can amplify the reach of public diplomacy and enhance soft power, they must be complemented with other strategies that foster direct cultural experiences and exchanges.

Objective 4: Understanding the mediating effect of soft power on the relationship between public diplomacy and international relations

The quantitative results confirmed Hypothesis 4, suggesting a significant mediating effect of soft power on the relationship between public diplomacy and international relations. This implies that a country's ability to influence others via attraction or persuasion (soft power), rather than coercion or force, can significantly enhance the impact of public diplomacy efforts on international relations. Nye (2004), who argues that the ability to shape others' preferences through appeal and attraction (soft power) can lead to favorable outcomes in international relations, supports this view. The qualitative findings echo this perspective. Respondents lauded the UAE success in promoting its culture, humanitarian efforts, and initiatives in technology and innovation, suggesting that these soft power strategies have positively influenced the UAE relations with other countries. This echoes the findings of Iwabuchi (2008), who asserts that a country's culture, values, and achievements can enhance its international image and relations.

However, respondents emphasized the importance of aligning national policies with universally appreciated values to maximize the UAE's soft power potential. This supports Nye's (2004) assertion that soft power is most effective when built on legitimacy, shared values, and credible international engagement. By continuing to promote cultural exchange, strategic diplomacy, and responsible governance, the UAE can further solidify its global standing and strengthen its international relationships.

7.2   Practical and Managerial Implications

The findings of this research give various practical implications for policymakers and practitioners in the UAE who are interested in enhancing the UAE soft power and improving the country's relations with other countries. In the first place, the results highlight how important it is to take an all-encompassing and unified strategy to public diplomacy. Public diplomacy extends far beyond the realm of traditional diplomacy and encompasses a variety of facets, including economic aid, international cooperation, leadership, and foreign policy. Policymakers should be aware of this expansive scope of public diplomacy. As a result, there should be efforts made to align these dimensions cohesively and consistently to present a unified image and boost the country's soft power. Second, the media and other forms of communication are extremely important contributors to the formation of the UAE soft power and the shaping of worldwide perceptions. Continued investment in media institutions, both domestic and foreign, is something that communication professionals and policymakers in the UAE should be doing to effectively promote the nation's culture, values, and accomplishments. The many venues of social media should be strategically utilized to communicate with an international audience, propagate positive narratives, and combat any unfavourable perceptions. To keep one's credibility and trustworthiness intact, additional efforts should be made to ensure transparency, ethical media practices, and responsible information sharing.

Thirdly, the findings highlight the importance of continuing to promote a culture of tolerance, inclusiveness, and diversity as part of the UAE's broader soft power strategy. Strengthening these values can further enhance the country's global reputation and foster positive international relationships. By emphasizing intercultural dialogue, global cooperation, and responsible governance, the UAE is well positioned to reinforce its international image and expand its influence through constructive and forward-looking public diplomacy efforts. The findings of this research have several managerial repercussions for organizations and

entities that are involved in fostering the soft power of the UAE and managing foreign relations. To begin, institutions that are responsible for public diplomacy ought to adopt a strategy that is coordinated and strategic. This includes ensuring that the promotion of the UAE culture, values, and accomplishments is consistent across all sectors, as well as aligning messaging and actions throughout those sectors. It is important to encourage collaboration between various entities, such as government agencies, media organizations, and cultural institutions, to make the most of public diplomacy initiatives and increase their overall impact.

Second, to enhance the UAE soft power messages, media organizations and communication experts should make use of the power that digital platforms and social media provide. It is very necessary to make investments in media infrastructure, the cultivation of talent, and the production of content if one wants to effectively reach and engage a worldwide audience. To have the desired effect on foreign relations, media campaigns need to be created with clear goals, specified audiences, and measurable outcomes in mind.

Thirdly, organizations involved in promoting the national brand of the UAE should continue to focus on advancing values such as sustainability, inclusiveness, and international cooperation. Strengthening the national brand involves showcasing the UAE's commitment to global development goals, supporting initiatives that foster social and economic progress, and participating in diplomatic efforts that promote regional stability. These efforts reinforce the UAE's reputation for responsible leadership and help preserve the integrity and influence of its national brand on the global stage.

In general, the managerial and practical ramifications shed light on the significance of adopting an all-encompassing and strategic approach to the management of public diplomacy and soft power. Organizations and politicians in the UAE can improve the country's soft power and develop stronger international ties by efficiently using media and communication

platforms, addressing criticism, and creating a favourable picture of the UAE culture, values, and achievements.

7.3   Limitations and future directions

The study was limited by its UAE citizen sample, which may have limited its generalizability. Future research should use a more diverse and representative sample for more complete insights. The study was also susceptible to self-report biases like social desirability and recall bias. Participants may have responded to social norms or misremembered their opinions and experiences. Future studies could use observational or qualitative methods to supplement self-reporting and gain a deeper understanding of the subject. While important to the research goals, the study focused on specific aspects of public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations, which may have overlooked other important factors. Future research should include more variables to better understand these topics.

Future research could examine the dynamics and changes in public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations using longitudinal study designs. This method would make finding causal relationships and long-term effects of factors easier. Comparative studies of the UAE and other nations may illuminate their public diplomacy and soft power strategies. Comparing countries' approaches may reveal best practices and policy lessons.

The complex relationships between public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations can be better understood using qualitative and quantitative methods. Researchers can improve quantitative findings by combining survey data with in-depth interviews better to understand people's perceptions, experiences, and motivations. The effectiveness of UAE public diplomacy and soft power strategies can be better understood by studying how people from different cultures view them. Cross-cultural comparative studies would show how culture affects public diplomacy success.

This study focuses on UAE citizens' views on soft power and international relations. Its central topics are media and communication, governance, people's values in soft power, and how UAE citizens view their country's foreign policy, leadership, international cooperation, and economic aid. Public diplomacy's soft power impact on UAE international relations is also examined. The study only examines media framing and how it affects UAE citizens' perceptions of soft power initiatives, particularly humanitarian aid. The study examines how media and communication affect public diplomacy, soft power, and cultural diplomacy as a soft power strategy.

Experimental studies could determine how specific public diplomacy interventions affect soft power and international relations. By manipulating variables in controlled settings, researchers can better understand how public diplomacy strategies affect soft power and international relations. Addressing these limitations and pursuing these research directions would help policymakers and practitioners in the UAE and abroad understand the relationship between public diplomacy, soft power, and international relations.

7.4   Recommendations

The UAE must make significant investments in expanding various social media sites and increasing participation on its platforms, whether local or global, in order to reach the largest possible audience base, as a comprehensive social media strategy that includes regular updates, attractive content and interaction can help with followers in increasing the visibility of the country at the global level and improving public perception.

1. Promoting cultural exchange programmes, as it is a powerful means of promoting mutual understanding and respect between different countries and cultures. The UAE can establish more cultural exchange programs with other countries, such as student exchange programs, cultural festivals, and art events.

2. Improving access to Emirati culture Through various means, such as tourism, literature, and cuisine, the country can promote its unique culture to the world by showcasing local cuisine, traditional music, and dance performances, and highlighting its important landmarks and tourist attractions.

3. The UAE should strengthen its public diplomacy by promoting sustainable development and addressing climate change. The country can continue to invest in renewable energy, promote green technologies, and support international environmental initiatives. By promoting sustainability, the UAE can demonstrate its commitment to global causes and attract like-minded partners. They can enhance their public diplomacy by enhancing their reputation as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. The country can continue to invest in education and research initiatives, support start-ups and small businesses, and promote its own innovative industries such as renewable energy, space exploration, and financial technology.

4. The Emirati media platforms should always seek to support and motivate the media sector towards development and progress at the global level by building an integrated system of coordination and cooperation that contributes to promoting the values (culture) of the UAE and allowing it to launch successfully to the world in its soft power strategy.

5. The need for regulatory bodies to give local media insights and knowledge on how to develop the leadership capabilities required for excellence, maintain their growth in the media sector, and influence global outlets. The Emirati media has a unique image of a platform for audiences through which dialogue is fostered between key players across the media spectrum. It provides an opportunity for soft power to discuss developments in the media industry apart from local and regional issues.

6. A bridge should be provided for communication not only between media platforms and the public but also between organizations, experts and specialists in various media fields and often between countries.

7. A soft power tactical approach should be used that adapts the UAE public diplomacy tools, channels, and partners to the target audience and context. You need to use a combination of public diplomacy tools, such as public affairs, cultural diplomacy, or exchange programs, that can communicate soft power messages and values effectively.

8. It should also use a variety of public diplomacy channels, such as traditional media, social media or face-to-face interactions, that can reach and communicate efficiently with the target audience.

9. The need to collaborate with a range of public diplomacy partners, such as civil society, academia, or business, who can amplify and complement soft power efforts. By using soft power, the UAE can influence the behaviour, opinions, and actions of the target audience.

The UAE has embarked on a strategic journey to enhance its global presence and influence through public diplomacy and soft power. This strategy's critical component is expanding and diversifying its social media outreach. The UAE investment in social media platforms, both local and global, is imperative to reach a broader audience. By creating engaging content, regularly updating their channels, and fostering interactive communication, the UAE can boost its visibility and positively shape public perception worldwide. A case in point is the UAE successful use of social media during the Dubai Expo 2020, where they effectively displayed their culture, innovations, and vision for the future, reaching millions of people globally and creating a lasting positive impression. Promoting cultural exchange programs is another vital recommendation for the UAE. These programs are instrumental in fostering mutual understanding and respect between different countries and cultures. Initiatives like student exchange programs, cultural festivals, and art events can significantly contribute to this

objective. For instance, the Sharjah World Book Fair and Abu Dhabi Art offer platforms where cultural exchange flourishes, allowing the UAE to display its rich heritage and contemporary artistic landscape. These events enhance cultural ties with other nations and underline the UAE commitment to being a global cultural hub.

Improving access to Emirati culture is also crucial. By promoting its unique culture through tourism, literature, and cuisine, the UAE can offer the world a glimpse into its rich heritage and modern lifestyle. Displaying local cuisine, traditional music, and dance performances and highlighting significant landmarks and tourist attractions can serve as a window to the Emirati way of life. A notable example is the annual Dubai Food Festival, which attracts culinary enthusiasts from around the globe, highlighting the diversity and richness of Emirati and international cuisine, thereby enhancing the UAE cultural appeal and reinforcing its soft power.

Furthermore, the UAE emphasis on sustainable development and addressing climate change is essential to its public diplomacy. Investing in renewable energy, promoting green technologies, and supporting international environmental initiatives positions the UAE as a leader in sustainability. Hosting COP28 demonstrates the country's commitment to environmental preservation and positions it as a pioneer in sustainable practices. In addition, enhancing the UAE reputation as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship through investments in education, research, startups, and innovative industries like renewable energy and space exploration further strengthens its soft power. By continuing to build on these recommendations, the UAE can effectively harness the power of public diplomacy to shape international perceptions and cement its status as an influential global player.

By utilizing soft power and public diplomacy, the UAE is deliberately establishing itself internationally and improving its standing and influence. The fundamental focus of this strategy initiative is broad and active participation via social media channels. This participation entails more than just growing one's online presence; it also entails creating material that appeals to a

worldwide audience, encouraging cross-border interactive contact, and updating these platforms often to maintain exciting and engaging content. The UAE skillful use of social media during major events like Dubai Expo 2020, where they captured a worldwide audience by presenting a mosaic of their culture, inventions, and forward-looking objectives, embodies the core of this method. The UAE also acknowledges the vital role that cultural exchange initiatives play in bridging national divides. These programs act as a means of promoting tolerance and understanding amongst people of different cultural backgrounds, which is essential in the globally interconnected world of today. The UAE is not only sharing its culture but also absorbing the rich tapestry of global cultures by participating in and creating a range of cultural exchanges, such as student exchanges, cultural festivals, and art events, enhancing its own societal fabric. Owing to its dedication to cultural diplomacy, the UAE is paving the way for dynamic cultural exchanges through events like the Sharjah World Book Fair and Abu Dhabi Art.

The UAE has aggressively promoted access to its culture through numerous pathways, aiming to display its distinct legacy and current achievements. By highlighting its traditional arts, food, landmarks, and tourist attractions, the UAE provides a window into the Emirati way of life for global audiences. Events like the Dubai Food Festival, which highlights the region's rich and diverse cuisine and increases the UAE attractiveness to tourists, are crucial. The UAE is also progressing in addressing global issues like sustainable development and climate change. The UAE exhibits its dedication to sustainability using investments in green technology, renewable energy, and worldwide environmental efforts. The UAE hosting of COP28 demonstrates its commitment to ecological conservation and establishes it as a pioneer in sustainable practices. By bringing the UAE ideals of sustainability and environmental responsibility into line, this commitment strengthens the country's soft power and contributes to the worldwide fight to combat climate change. Innovation and entrepreneurship are other

essential components of the UAE goal to strengthen its soft power. The UAE is strengthening its standing as a center for innovation by cultivating an environment that benefits research, education, businesses, and sectors like space exploration and renewable energy. This strengthens the country's reputation as a progressive and vibrant society and adds to its economic diversity.

The UAE media outlets are essential to this all-encompassing plan because they spread worldwide awareness of the country's accomplishments, values, and culture. These platforms play a critical role in presenting the UAE as a model of growth and development in the media industry through an integrated system of coordination and collaboration. The UAE dedication to quality and innovation in communication is further demonstrated by the focus on building leadership skills in the media industry and influencing international outlets. Furthermore, creating a communication bridge between media platforms and the public and between international organizations, specialists, and media practitioners is essential. This strategy makes it easier for the UAE soft power narrative to be disseminated more subtly and effectively, increasing the impact of its messaging on audiences around the world.

The UAE is leading the way in soft power and foreign diplomacy by embracing the digital era and the global narrative on sustainability and innovation while also going outside conventional diplomatic channels. The UAE is positioned as a pioneer in contemporary communication techniques due to its strategic emphasis on digital diplomacy, primarily through the creative use of social media. This strategy aims to engage a worldwide audience and tell the Emirati story in a way that speaks to individuals from various backgrounds and cultures, not only provide information. Through digital platforms, the UAE can spread awareness of its accomplishments and programs, such as the Mars mission and its advancements in renewable energy, to a worldwide audience, strengthening ties and understanding with other countries. Furthermore, the UAE initiatives to ground its soft power

in innovation and environmental principles show a forward-thinking outlook consistent with world goals. The UAE is presenting itself as a proactive participant in global environmental solutions through significant investments in sustainable energy, such as the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, and hosting important international conferences on climate change. In addition to improving the nation's reputation abroad as a law-abiding citizen, this commitment aligns with the increasing worldwide awareness of environmental sustainability and the pressing need for creative responses to climate change. The UAE strategy emphasizes how crucial it is to match national development objectives with worldwide issues to promote alliances and cooperative efforts beyond customary diplomatic contacts.

In addition, the UAE soft power strategy includes promoting an international cultural conversation that honors variety and promotes understanding among nations. The UAE is dedicated to becoming a crossroads of cultural interchange with projects like the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which unites Eastern and Western art and culture. In addition to strengthening the UAE reputation as a liberal and cosmopolitan nation, this emphasis on cultural diplomacy is a potent instrument for fostering international understanding. The UAE reinforces its position as a dynamic participant on the global scene, skilled at negotiating the many intersections of culture, diplomacy, and international cooperation. It presents itself as a melting pot of cultures and a champion of cultural diversity.

A strategic approach to public diplomacy adapted to the situation and target audience is crucial for the UAE. The UAE may successfully communicate its views and ideals by using a variety of diplomatic instruments and avenues. To ensure that the UAE soft power is projected as effectively as possible, a sophisticated knowledge of the audiences and settings in which these messages will be received is necessary. Collaborating with a wide range of partners from the corporate world, academia, and civil society is also essential. These alliances could help the UAE soft power projects and give them more substance and legitimacy. By interacting with

these diverse parties, the UAE can use its knowledge and connections to further its objectives in public diplomacy.

Finally, the UAE soft power strategy depends on improving foreign affairs and demonstrating a solid grasp of international relations. This entails exhibiting the nation's achievements and culture, having meaningful conversations, and forming alliances that deal with global issues. The UAE can improve its reputation abroad and project a favorable and powerful image by making these efforts. The UAE strategic utilization of soft power and public diplomacy is a complex undertaking that spans a variety of projects and activities. The UAE is aggressively trying to improve its reputation and impact worldwide. This includes investing in sustainability and innovation, growing its social media presence, and encouraging cultural exchanges. The UAE may enhance its standing as a prominent global player, influencing worldwide attitudes and fostering international collaboration by persisting in the creation and execution of these tactics.

Focusing on Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement: The UAE has made remarkable steps in adopting its unique position as a global hub for innovation, culture, and diplomacy. Its strategic location, advanced infrastructure, and commitment to modernization have enabled it to become a leading player in regional and international affairs. Initiatives such as the UAE Vision 2030 and Centennial 2071 reflect the country's long-term goals to diversify the economy, foster knowledge-based industries, and promote cultural understanding. These strengths have significantly contributed to the UAE's soft power, enhancing its image as a forward-thinking and inclusive nation. One of the UAE's most significant strengths lies in its ability to blend tradition with modernity. By preserving its cultural heritage while embracing global trends in technology, education, and sustainability, the UAE has crafted a unique national brand. Cultural diplomacy through events like Expo 2020 Dubai, art exhibitions, and international forums has further amplified the country's global visibility. These initiatives serve

not only to project the nation's values but also to encourage cross-cultural dialogue and mutual respect. At the same time, there are areas that present opportunities for continued improvement, particularly in enhancing digital diplomacy, expanding grassroots cultural engagement, and strengthening global partnerships. Encouraging greater inclusivity and representation in media narratives, increasing public access to cultural institutions, and promoting youth participation in global dialogue can help broaden the reach and impact of the UAE's soft power strategy. These opportunities are not criticisms, but rather strategic openings for the country to deepen its influence in a rapidly evolving global landscape. Furthermore, the UAE's governance framework ensures social stability while allowing space for progress in civil engagement and innovation. As the country moves forward, maintaining this balance while nurturing openness, participation, and transparency can further solidify trust both domestically and internationally. By building on its current achievements and addressing emerging global expectations, the UAE is well-positioned to reinforce its role as a diplomatic leader and cultural bridge between East and West.

7.5   Conclusion

The UAE has made significant strides in its soft power strategy, leveraging various aspects such as governance, people and values, media and communication, international cooperation, and environmental sustainability [64]. Through its robust foreign policy, strong leadership, and strategic economic aid, the UAE has managed to create a substantial impact on the global stage. The country's commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive society, as well as its focus on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, has further cemented its reputation as a progressive and forward-thinking nation. The UAE's emphasis on developing a vibrant media landscape and its focus on technology and innovation have been crucial in

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[64] The practice of conserving natural resources

enhancing its global influence. By capitalizing on its role as a regional hub for business, innovation, and technology, the UAE has successfully attracted foreign talent and investment. Furthermore, the country's engagement in philanthropic initiatives and public-private partnerships has played a vital role in strengthening its soft power efforts.

Environmental sustainability is yet another crucial component of the UAE soft power strategy, with the country demonstrating its commitment to addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development through various initiatives and renewable energy projects. The successful hosting of COP 28 in the UAE is a testament to the country's dedication to environmental preservation. The challenges faced by the UAE in its soft power strategy can be addressed by adopting the recommendations discussed in this chapter. By focusing on further enhancing its media and communication strategies, promoting gender equality, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, expanding international partnerships, and pursuing environmental sustainability, the UAE can continue to strengthen its soft power and solidify its position as a global leader. These efforts reflect the nation's commitment to forward-thinking development, responsible governance, and active participation in shaping a more connected and sustainable world.

The UAE's efforts to establish a prominent position on the international scene have come to be characterized by the complex interaction between public diplomacy and soft power strategy. This investigation of the UAE strategic use of public diplomacy to support its soft power has shed light on the various methods and projects that have all worked together to improve its reputation, influence, and status abroad. The fundamental component of the UAE approach is the understanding that public diplomacy goes beyond the parameters of conventional statecraft. Through culture, values, humanitarian endeavors, and technological and innovative breakthroughs, the UAE has skillfully negotiated the spheres of soft power to draw in and co-opt rather than compel. This sophisticated approach reflects a deeper awareness

among the UAE leadership of the changing dynamics of global influence in the twenty-first century, when attraction becomes just as important as force. Communication and the media are key components of the UAE soft power and public diplomacy. The UAE can transmit its narratives, values, and cultural identity well beyond its boundaries due to its deliberate investment in conventional and digital media outlets. This has made it easier for people worldwide to learn more about the culture and accomplishments of the UAE. Still, it has also proven invaluable for managing attitudes abroad and dispelling false preconceptions. The UAE is a prime example of how media can enhance a country's soft power in the digital era. Its skillful use of social media platforms to publicize its projects, including the Mars mission and its dedication to renewable energy, is impressive. But there have been difficulties along the way. The UAE's goals for soft power can be further advanced by strengthening the alignment between its domestic achievements and its international image. This underscores the importance of a cohesive approach to public diplomacy that integrates cultural values, economic development, and responsible governance. The UAE's future direction in international relations will continue to benefit from proactive engagement, inclusive initiatives, and strategic communication that reflect the nation's vision and priorities on the global stage.

The UAE soft power and public diplomacy will likely change, reflecting the fluidity of international relations and the state of the media worldwide. The UAE attempts to strengthen its global standing are expected to continue to revolve around sustainability, innovation, and cultural diplomacy. Furthermore, to forge genuine international connections and understanding, an integrated strategy incorporating direct, immersive cultural encounters with digital diplomacy is becoming increasingly necessary. The UAE experience using public diplomacy to strengthen its soft power is proof of the transformational potential of deliberate international involvement. The UAE has shown via its diverse strategy that soft power—fueled by culture, innovation, and values—can significantly impact international relations and

perceptions. The vital role that communication and the media have played in this attempt has brought attention to how diplomacy is evolving in the digital era when the struggle for hearts and minds is frequently fought on computer and smartphone screens.

The UAE upholds freedom of speech within a structured framework that prioritizes social harmony, national unity, and responsible discourse. While individuals are encouraged to express their views, this freedom operates within clearly defined legal and cultural boundaries designed to maintain respect, tolerance, and cohesion among the diverse population. The approach reflects the UAE's broader governance model, which balances progressive development with the preservation of traditional values. This regulated environment ensures that freedom of expression contributes constructively to national dialogue and development, aligning with the country's strategic objectives in public diplomacy and its efforts to project a stable and inclusive national image on the global stage.

The UAE is still fully committed to using public diplomacy to further its soft power agenda, even as it navigates the difficulties of international relations. The insights from the UAE experience are invaluable for other countries looking to increase their global influence through comparable strategies. Ensuring that the country's foreign goals align with its activities on the international scene is a continuous task that involves striking a balance between the pursuit of soft power and the requirement to respond to criticism from both the inside and the outside. Ultimately, the UAE serves as an example of how public diplomacy affects soft power strategy, highlighting a more general change in the dynamics of world influence. The capacity to draw in and seize via political principles, cultural allure, and policy has become a vital tool in states attempting to negotiate the challenging landscape of international relations in an increasingly linked globe. The UAE experience heralds a new age in which soft power becomes crucial in determining a country's global status and influence. It also provides an engaging case study of public diplomacy's role in determining a nation's fate in the twenty-first century.

In addition to the strategies above, the UAE investment in education and cultural diplomacy has been a significant factor in amplifying its soft power. Establishing world-class educational institutions and hosting international academic conferences have positioned the UAE as a center of learning and intellectual exchange. This focus on education enhances the nation's human capital and attracts international students and academics, fostering a global exchange of ideas and cultures. Furthermore, cultural diplomacy initiatives such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and the Dubai Opera illustrate the UAE commitment to becoming a cultural nexus. These institutions display the richness of the region's heritage and a willingness to embrace and celebrate global art and culture. Such initiatives enhance the UAE cultural appeal, making it an attractive destination for tourists and cultural enthusiasts worldwide, reinforcing its soft power.

The UAE approach to public diplomacy also involves strategically using international forums and events to bolster its global presence. The nation's active participation in the United Nations, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and other international organizations demonstrates its commitment to global issues and international cooperation. Hosting events like the World Government Summit and the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week further underlines the UAE role as a convenor on global issues, ranging from governance to sustainable development. These platforms allow the UAE to share its insights and experiences and learn from global best practices, fostering a spirit of international collaboration. Such engagement is crucial to building diplomatic relations and enhancing the influence in shaping global agendas. Moreover, the UAE promotes freedom of speech within a structured framework that respects national values and fosters constructive global dialogue. By continuing to invest in these areas, the UAE can further elevate its public diplomacy efforts, strengthening its soft power and reinforcing its position as a dynamic and influential player on the world stage.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Study Axes and Dimensions

The Impact of Public Diplomacy on Soft Power Strategy: The Case of the UAE

Study axes and dimensions	Alpha Cronbach coefficient	number of items
The first axis: Public diplomacy		
1.1-International Cooperation	0.696	5
1.2-Economic Aids	0.728	5
1.3-Foreign Policy	0.694	5
1.4-UAE Leadership	0.710	5
Total first axis:	0.876	20
The second axis: Soft Power		
2.1 – Media and Communication	0.649	5
2.2-Governance	0.773	8
2.3 - People and Values	0.742	7
Total axis two	0.891	22
Third axis: Foreign Affairs		
3.1- International Relation	0.735	7
total scale	0.937	49

Appendix 2: First Axis Public Diplomacy

Paragraphs of the first axis :Public Diplomacy	Pearson correlation coefficient	The level of significance
IC1-Human rights are respected in UAE?	0.567**	0.000
IC2-UAE pays attention to advancing global economic?	0.527**	0.000
IC3-UAE enhances peace advocacy?	0.598**	0.000
IC4-Development cooperation is enhanced in UAE?	0.544**	0.000
IC5-It is clearly observed that humanitarian assistance is enhanced in UAE?	0.582**	0.000
EA1-Based on the UAE foreign policy, the importance of economic relations with other countries is UAE concern?	0.639**	0.000
EA2-Several countries are being developed in economies by UAE?	0.585**	0.000
EA3-It is seen in the foreign policy of UAE that the competitive economy is being a UAE focus?	0.541**	0.000
EA4-UAE offers economic opportunities for workforce?	0.566**	0.000
EA5-An entrepreneurial spirit is observed in UAE foreign policy?	0.601**	0.000
FP1-The foreign policies of UAE aim to establish the philosophy that 1 diplomacy should be one of the strategic priorities for putting into practice the UAE Global Strategy?	0.513**	0.000
FP2-It is highlighted by UAE foreign policies that the necessity of combining efforts in the field of 1 diplomacy,	0.605**	0.000

including strategic communication, both inside and outside the nation?		
FP3-UAE has made it a priority in establishing its foreign policy to maintain strong links with countries in the Arab and Muslim world?	0.585**	0.000
FP4-The foreign policy strategy of UAE has a significant support and assistance to the region through a variety of means ?	0.532**	0.000
FP5-In UAE, economic as well as humanitarian aids have developed into an important component of the country's foreign policy ?	0.553**	0.000
UL1-UAE leadership is aware of the succession of the 1 diplomacy?	0.541**	0.000
UL2-In UAE, the leadership structure is in place to manage the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of 1 diplomacy effectively?	0.557**	0.000
UL3-The leadership in UAE is committed to financially support all resources needed to support the design, development, delivery, and management in UAE?	0.610**	0.000
UL4-The citizens of UAE are motivated by their leaders towards achieving the country's 1 diplomacy effectively and achieving the country's goals?	0.561**	0.000
UL5-UAE leadership is good at adapting to different situations?	0.602**	0.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Appendix 3: Second axis: Soft Power

Paragraphs of the second axis: soft power	Pearson correlation coefficient	The level of significance
MC1-Public opinion and influence global conversations are shaped in UAE through websites, blogs, and social media?	0.597**	0.000
MC2-UAE invests in media outlets to promote its views, policies, education, and humanitarian aids?	0.531**	0.000
MC3-UAE the most focused is the use of social media for 1 diplomacy (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)?	0.579**	0.000
MC4-Most of the current e-diplomacy coverage focuses on 1 diplomacy, with the use of media activities of presidents or ministers contributing to the creation of a positive country brand in UAE?	0.541**	0.000
MC5-UAE implements communication skill to represent the ability and knowledge to extend its own outreach and visibility?	0.567**	0.000
MC6-Media and communications plan can frequently be used to resolve issues quickly?	0.605**	0.000
MC7-Do you think that Media platforms are strong enough for an international audience and able to pass UAE values (culture) and reflect in positive way on soft power strategy?	0.561**	0.000
G1-Governance diplomacy is used in UAE to solve problems?	0.572**	0.000
G2-Governance sovereignty is respected as a real occurring concept in UAE?	0.529**	0.000

G3-Governance trust and cooperation are built in UAE with its citizens?	0.612**	0.000
G4-UAE governance has effective leadership that enhances effective relationship with its people?	0.590**	0.000
G5-UAE governance enhances leading multinational corporations?	0.613**	0.000
G6-In UAE, governments and other major institutions do to evaluate and bolster their soft power credentials?	0.600**	0.000
G7-UAE governance attempt at setting priorities for governments to enhance their standing abroad and direct policy direction?	0.602**	0.000
G8-The governance of UAE has little control over a significant portion of the effects of its soft power use?	0.502**	0.000
PV1-The political system in UAE serves its people?	0.515**	0.000
PV2-A commitment is seen as core values, including its own peoples' human rights in UAE?	0.539**	0.000
PV3-UAE as the beacon of modernity with its values of openness, mobility, individualism, pluralism, voluntarism, and freedom?	0.589**	0.000
PV4-The influence in the region has been affected by UAE policy?	0.585**	0.000
PV5-A strong national brand and positive soft power perceptions are enhanced by UAE policy?	0.542**	0.000

PV6-In UAE, people are enabled to improve their standings among their neighbors, market its resources, and craft the image it projects on the global stage.	0.578**	0.000
PV7-The alignment between nation brand and soft power strategy can produce better results in UAE?	0.610**	0.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Appendix 4: Third Axis Foreign Affairs

Paragraphs of the third axis: foreign affairs	Pearson correlation coefficient	The level of significance
IR1-The implementations of international cooperation in UAE enhance its international relations positively?	0.633**	0.000
IR2-UAE implementations of economic aids enhance its international relations position?	0.656**	0.000
IR3-UAE effectively enhances its international relations with other countries?	0.634**	0.000
IR4-The present foreign policy of UAE strengthens its international relation?	0.662**	0.000
IR5-UAE foreign policies positively affect international relation?	0.614**	0.000
IR6-UAE focus on people and values positively affects its international relation practices?	0.609**	0.000
IR7-Media and communication may enhance the effectiveness of UAE international relation?	0.549**	0.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Appendix 5: Public Diplomacy Analysis Results

Public diplomacy			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
UL4	<---	F1	1.000			
UL3	<---	F1	1.151	0.136	8.487	0.000
UL2	<---	F1	1.054	0.134	7.855	0.000
UL1	<---	F1	0.947	0.123	7.697	0.000
FP5	<---	F1	1.014	0.130	7.818	0.000
FP4	<---	F1	0.988	0.127	7.780	0.000
FP3	<---	F1	1.007	0.121	8.304	0.000
FP2	<---	F1	1.087	0.130	8.377	0.000
FP1	<---	F1	0.946	0.128	7.368	0.000
EA5	<---	F1	1.074	0.128	8.358	0.000
EA4	<---	F1	0.985	0.122	8.061	0.000
EA3	<---	F1	0.963	0.127	7.600	0.000
EA2	<---	F1	1.073	0.132	8.128	0.000
EA1	<---	F1	1.275	0.146	8.738	0.000
IC5	<---	F1	0.812	0.125	6.488	0.000
IC4	<---	F1	0.668	0.113	5.917	0.000
IC3	<---	F1	0.769	0.114	6.727	0.000
IC2	<---	F1	0.624	0.110	5.700	0.000
IC1	<---	F1	0.752	0.120	6.266	0.000
UL5	<---	F1	1.064	0.126	8.462	0.000

Appendix 6: Standardized Regression Weights (PD)

Standardized Regression Weights (PD)			Estimate
UL4	<---	F1	0.646
UL3	<---	F1	0.598
UL2	<---	F1	0.677
UL1	<---	F1	0.578
FP5	<---	F1	0.688
FP4	<---	F1	0.622
FP3	<---	F1	0.771
FP2	<---	F1	0.696
FP1	<---	F1	0.599
EA5	<---	F1	0.577
EA4	<---	F1	0.647
EA3	<---	F1	0.597
EA2	<---	F1	0.554
EA1	<---	F1	0.617
IC5	<---	F1	0.771
IC4	<---	F1	0.567
IC3	<---	F1	0.588
IC2	<---	F1	0.761
IC1	<---	F1	0.693
UL5	<---	F1	0.787
Composite Reliability (CR)			0.937
Extracted average variance (AVE)			0.430

Appendix 7: Soft Power Analysis Results

soft power			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
PV7	<---	F2	1.000			
PV6	<---	F2	0.762	0.106	7.175	0.000
PV5	<---	F2	0.857	0.106	8.116	0.000
PV4	<---	F2	0.906	0.103	8.835	0.000
PV3	<---	F2	0.946	0.107	8.807	0.000
PV2	<---	F2	0.803	0.099	8.085	0.000
PV1	<---	F2	0.822	0.108	7.629	0.000
G8	<---	F2	0.846	0.113	7.489	0.000
G7	<---	F2	0.953	0.105	9.093	0.000
G6	<---	F2	0.953	0.105	9.040	0.000
G5	<---	F2	0.946	0.101	9.322	0.000
G4	<---	F2	0.744	0.103	7.250	0.000
G3	<---	F2	0.922	0.100	9.257	0.000
G2	<---	F2	0.795	0.100	7.926	0.000
G1	<---	F2	0.899	0.105	8.585	0.000
MC7	<---	F2	0.940	0.115	8.211	0.000
MC6	<---	F2	0.900	0.100	9.003	0.000
MC5	<---	F2	0.843	0.099	8.543	0.000
MC4	<---	F2	0.887	0.110	8.074	0.000
MC3	<---	F2	0.688	0.098	7.024	0.000
MC2	<---	F2	0.797	0.101	7.883	0.000
MC1	<---	F2	0.760	0.105	7.238	0.000

Appendix 8: Standardized Regression Weights (SP)

Standardized Regression Weights (SPS)			Estimate
PV7	<---	F2	0.687
PV6	<---	F2	0.692
PV5	<---	F2	0.677
PV4	<---	F2	0.595
PV3	<---	F2	0.588
PV2	<---	F2	0.599
PV1	<---	F2	0.672
G8	<---	F2	0.662
G7	<---	F2	0.597
G6	<---	F2	0.596
G5	<---	F2	0.688
G4	<---	F2	0.744
G3	<---	F2	0.603
G2	<---	F2	0.794
G1	<---	F2	0.646
MC7	<---	F2	0.688
MC6	<---	F2	0.681
MC5	<---	F2	0.598
MC4	<---	F2	0.599
MC3	<---	F2	0.677
MC2	<---	F2	0.691
MC1	<---	F2	0.643
Composite Reliability (CR)			0.945
Extracted average variance (AVE)			0.433

Appendix 9: International Relations Analysis Result

International relations			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p- value
IR7	<---	F3	1.000			
IR6	<---	F3	1.313	0.228	5.766	0.000
IR5	<---	F3	1.172	0.212	5.523	0.000
IR4	<---	F3	1.510	0.246	6.136	0.000
IR3	<---	F3	1.315	0.227	5.803	0.000
IR2	<---	F3	1.483	0.244	6.083	0.000
IR1	<---	F3	1.479	0.258	5.726	0.000

Appendix 10: Standardized Regression Weights (IR)

Standardized Regression Weights (IR)			Estimate
IR7	<---	F3	0.599
IR6	<---	F3	0.633
IR5	<---	F3	0.594
IR4	<---	F3	0.628
IR3	<---	F3	0.589
IR2	<---	F3	0.698
IR1	<---	F3	0.692
Composite Reliability (CR)			**0.824**
Extracted average variance (AVE)			**0.402**

Appendix 11: Descriptive Statistics 1

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
IC1-Human rights are respected in UAE?	352	4.24	0.806
IC2-UAE pays attention to advancing the global economic?	352	4.29	0.749
IC3-UAE enhances peace advocacy?	352	4.53	0.754
IC4-Development cooperation is enhanced in UAE?	352	4.23	0.767
IC5-It is clearly observed that humanitarian assistance is enhanced in UAE?	352	4.14	0.833
EA1-Based on the UAE foreign policy, the importance of economic relations with other countries is UAE concern?	352	3.96	0.871
EA2-Several countries are being developed in economies by UAE?	352	4.27	0.816
EA3-It is seen in the foreign policy of UAE that the competitive economy is being a UAE focus?	352	4.09	0.805
EA4-UAE offers economic opportunities for workforce?	352	4.33	0.759
EA5-An entrepreneurial spirit is observed in UAE foreign policy?	352	4.24	0.784
FP1-The foreign policies of UAE aim to establish the philosophy that 1 diplomacy should be one of the strategic priorities for putting into practice the UAE Global Strategy?	352	3.89	0.825
FP2-It is highlighted by UAE foreign policies that the necessity of combining efforts in the field of 1 diplomacy, including strategic communication, both inside and outside the nation?	352	4.09	0.792

FP3-UAE has made it a priority in establishing its foreign policy to maintain strong links with countries in the Arab and Muslim world?	352	4.27	0.743
FP4-The foreign policy strategy of UAE has a significant support and assistance to the region through a variety of means?	352	4.23	0.800
FP5-In UAE, economic as well as humanitarian aids have developed into an important component of the country's foreign policy?	352	4.16	0.815
UL1-UAE leadership is aware of the succession of the 1 diplomacy?	352	4.36	0.778
UL2-In UAE, the leadership structure is in place to manage the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of 1 diplomacy effectively?	352	3.85	0.842
UL3-The leadership in UAE is committed to financially support all resources needed to support the design, development, delivery, and management in UAE?	352	4.08	0.822
UL4-The citizens of UAE are motivated by their leaders towards achieving the country's 1 diplomacy effectively and achieving the country's goals?	352	4.27	0.771
UL5-UAE leadership is good at adapting to different situations?	352	4.43	0.763
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Appendix 12: Descriptive Statistics 2

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Descriptive Statistics				
MC1-Public opinion and influence global conversations are shaped in UAE through websites, blogs, and social media?		352	4.03	0.819
MC2-UAE invests in media outlets to promote its views, policies, education, and humanitarian aids?		352	4.36	0.776
MC3-UAE the most focused is the use of social media for 1 diplomacy (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)?		352	4.23	0.768
MC4-Most of the current e-diplomacy coverage focuses on 1 diplomacy, with the use of media activities of presidents or ministers contributing to the creation of a positive country brand in UAE?		352	3.72	0.838
MC5-UAE implements communication skill to represent the ability and knowledge to extend its own outreach and visibility?		352	4.33	0.742
MC6-Media and communications plan can frequently be used to resolve issues quickly?		352	4.32	0.740
MC7-Do you think that Media platforms are strong enough for an international audience and able to pass UAE values (culture) and reflect in positive way on soft power strategy?		352	3.86	0.870
G1-Governance diplomacy is used in UAE to solve problems?		352	4.32	0.786
G2-Governance sovereignty is respected as a real occurring concept in UAE?		352	4.20	0.768
G3-Governance trust and cooperation are built in UAE with its citizens?		352	4.34	0.731
G4-UAE governance has effective leadership that enhances effective relationship with its people?		352	4.18	0.801

G5-UAE governance enhances leading multinational corporations?	352	4.37	0.743
G6-In UAE, governments and other major institutions do to evaluate and bolster their soft power credentials?	352	4.11	0.780
G7-UAE governance attempt at setting priorities for governments to enhance their standing abroad and direct policy direction?	352	4.05	0.774
G8-The governance of UAE has little control over a significant portion of the effects of its soft power use?	352	4.24	0.876
PV1-The political system in UAE serves its people?	352	4.31	0.832
PV2-A commitment is seen as core values, including its own peoples' human rights in UAE?	352	4.20	0.758
PV3-UAE as the beacon of modernity with its values of openness, mobility, individualism, pluralism, voluntarism, and freedom?	352	4.05	0.801
PV4-The influence in the region has been affected by UAE policy?	352	4.44	0.764
PV5-A strong nation brand and positive soft power perceptions are enhanced by UAE policy?	352	4.11	0.804
PV6-In UAE, people are enabled to improve their standings among its neighbors, market its resources, and craft the image it projects on the global stage?	352	3.83	0.830
PV7-The alignment between nation brand and soft power strategy can produce better results in UAE?	352	4.34	0.808
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Appendix 13: Descriptive Statistics 3

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
IR1-The implementations of international cooperation in UAE enhance its international relation positively?	352	4.01	0.862
IR2-UAE implementations of economic aids enhance its international relation position?	352	4.36	0.741
IR3-UAE effectively enhances its international relation with other countries?	352	4.25	0.743
IR4-The present foreign policy of UAE strengthens its international relation?	352	4.43	0.736
IR5-UAE foreign policies positively affect international relation?	352	4.11	0.739
IR6-UAE focus on people and values positively affects its international relation practices?	352	4.28	0.753
IR7-Media and communication may enhance the effectiveness of UAE international relation?	352	4.16	0.746
Valid N (listwise)	352		

Appendix 14: Correlations

Correlations		Soft Power
1.1-International Cooperation	Pearson Correlation	0.475**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
1.2-Economic Aids	Pearson Correlation	0.544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
Foreign_Policy	Pearson Correlation	0.572**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
1.4-UAE Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.594**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Correlations		International Relation
1.1-International Cooperation	Pearson Correlation	0.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
1.2-Economic Aids	Pearson Correlation	0.450**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
Foreign_Policy	Pearson Correlation	0.507**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
1.4-UAE Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	352
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		