

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

**THE ROLE OF CULTURE AS A SOFT POWER STRATEGY IN THE PROMOTION
OF NATIONAL INTERESTS AMONG AFRICAN STATES: A CASE STUDY OF
KENYA**

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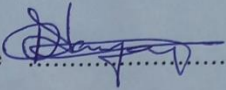
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
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SEPTEMBER 2021

DECLARATION

I, Bwire Dancan Nanyanga hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

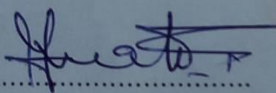
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my parents James Bwire Nanyanga and Teresiah Nyaguthii Kinyua for being a source of inspiration and encouragement in my life and the support they have given me throughout.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Patrick Maluki for his assistance with subject development and study implementation. I would also like to express my gratitude to my classmates and group members for their encouragement and suggestions, which helped me gain valuable insight into this project.

I would also like to express my gratitude to God for his mercy and grace.

ABSTRACT

In the pursuit of their national interests, African states have employed different strategies including culture diplomacy. However, it is important to find out how culture is perceived in the international system as soft-power strategy in promoting national interests. This study investigated how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests and determined the effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest. The research used soft power theory as analytical tool of study. A mixed-methods case study design was used in the study, which included both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The descriptive data was collected and managed using the qualitative methodology. Qualitative method was used to evaluate qualitative elements such as the respondents' attitudes and views, which do not have standard metrics. The quantitative method, on the other hand, was used to collect and manage numerical data that was used to quantify disparities, predict relationships, and identify characteristics. The study has found that Culture is known to shape ideas and serves as an instrument by which occurrences around people can be analyzed. It also offers people ways of seeing, thinking, and interpreting the things around them. The legacy of a state's cultural heritage and history has a significant impact on its external affairs. States inherit culture which in turn influences their interests and the course of action they take to pursue those interests in relation to other states. The approach a nation therefore takes to address its external problems is therefore determined by its belief and traditional values which have developed over the years. A number of countries in the first world continue to invest heavily in the area of culture and one of the indicators to this is the expanding presence of official bodies for cultural exchange in foreign countries. The function of culture as a soft power tool in the promotion of national interest among African governments was investigated in this study. This current state of affairs therefore inspires an investigation by the present study which sought to ascertain the role culture plays as a soft power strategy in the advancement of Kenya's national interests. Culture as a soft power is perceived as a silent weapon that countries can use to gain soft control over other nations through the application of non-violent means to engender mutual understanding and promote relationships. The purpose of promoting culture by countries has therefore always been perceived as a goal of influencing foreign audience. The function of culture as a soft power is to entice foreigners to have a favorable opinion of a country's people, government, and culture. This in turn induces greater cooperation among nations and helps in changing and managing policies and the political environment in the international system. The study recommends that a strong marketing strategy should be employed to make use of every opportunity to market Kenya at the international stage through sports or export of human capital. Secondly, there is need to improve on cross-cultural education programmes. Where each culture can learn from the other, this will open different opportunities for learning and economic benefits. Finally, Kenya needs to invest heavily in the area of culture in order to facilitate cultural exchange in foreign countries by establishing Kenya cultural institutes in foreign countries such as Chinese Confucius institutes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Culture has come to play a significant role in the provision of ethical, moral, and economic conditions of community existence in the domains of contemporary international relations. According to Gibson, culture is a social philosophy with corresponding organizations and systems that include ideas and viewpoints of politics, religion, ethics, science, arts, and compatible systems in a wide sense. Culture, in a narrow sense, is a social ideology with associated organizations and systems that encompass concepts and opinions of politics, religion, ethics, science, arts, and compatible systems.¹ Culture is therefore a dynamic process and should not in any way be perceived as static. It is also not visible to the naked eye but the role it plays in people's lives exists all the time. With the aid of soft power, culture can help a country influence the behaviour of other countries to be consistent with their national values and interests.²

Holden posits that the current world situation has imposed a collision of cultures and countries are persistently formulating new strategies in pursuit of their own interests.³ Economics, politics, culture, science and technology have all become basic factors in nation states strategic calculations. Interactions between different cultural forces in the present century have become an indispensable state of events that cannot be overlooked. Arising commonalities as a result of cultural exchanges is a reinforcing agent of interdependence among nation states and the commonalities in national interests is increasing every day, particularly driven by economic globalization.

¹ Gibson, M. (2007). *Culture and power: A history of cultural studies*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.

² Ibid.

³ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

Konsola asserts that a shift in international configuration and adjustment in state power relations are as a matter of fact adjustments in interests.⁴ Global integration arising out of increased cultural interactions has served to strengthen mechanisms of political consultation and economic interdependence. The basis of this new model of evolving international relations is precisely as a result of the influence of culture's soft power. According to Throsby, a number of countries have chosen cultural growth to boost their productivity and international impact.⁵ Some of a country's most important tools are its cultural growth and its ability to decide the laws, norms, and regimes that regulate its international conduct.

Holden contends that the cultural characteristics possessed by any given society are important because such characteristics provide a cultural framework by which national interests can be pursued.⁶ According to the scholar, national interests can consist of economic interests, political interests, security interests and foreign policy interests. Every country possesses its own national interests rooted on its domestic culture. Media and arts activities; local festivals and celebratory events; intangible and tangible heritage, such as gastronomy, archaeology, local dialect, culture, and rituals; and the repertoire of local skills, goods, manufacturing services, and techniques are all examples of cultural capital. The cultural soft power of a country can be difficult to perceive and measure but can mean a lot of success in cooperation as well as investments and co-prosperity between overseas enterprises and domestic enterprises. Cultural soft power of a country can also be difficult to improve as it takes a long-term cultivation and accumulation to create.⁷ The function

⁴ Konsola, A. (2006). *Cultural Development and Politics*; Papazisi: Athens, Greece.

⁵ Throsby, C. (2001). *Economics and Culture*. Cambridge University Press, UK.

⁶ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

⁷ Jian, H. (2001). *The Competition for Soft Power: Trends of Cultural Competition in the Context of Globalization*. China Higher Education Press.

of culture as a soft power tool in the promotion of national interest among African governments was investigated in this study. The study pays special attention to the African state of Kenya.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Radcliffe contends Culture is a form of soft power that has long been an essential component of states' ability to pursue their goals and consolidate a unified national power. Comprehensive national power is a state's whole power and international influence that includes both soft and hard power that the state needs for survival and development.⁸ Unfortunately, most African states have not yet fully grasped the significance of culture as a soft power strategy that can be used to promote national interests.⁹ Instead many African states have committed too much attention on economic development at the expense of preserving and spreading their rich cultural traditions which they can use to command influence and register prosperity. Against this backdrop, the international system is witnessing some serious power shifts, competition between states is increasing, and major changes are taking place in the global soft power landscape. A number of countries in the first world continue to invest heavily in the area of culture and one of the indicators to this is the expanding presence of official bodies for cultural exchange in foreign countries. The function of culture as a soft power tool in the promotion of national interest among African governments was investigated in this study. This current state of affairs therefore inspires an investigation by the present study which sought to ascertain the role culture plays as a soft power strategy in the advancement of Kenya's national interests.

⁸ Radcliffe, S. (2006). *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World*. Geographies, actors, and paradigms, Routledge, New York, pp. 36-7.

⁹ Mulcahy, K. (2013). *Culture and International Relation*. Praeger Publishers, New York, p. 67-70.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. How is culture perceived in international system as soft-power strategy in promoting national interests?
- ii. How has Kenya applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests?
- iii. How effective is culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

The study's overall objective is to look into the importance of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interests.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine how culture is perceived in the international system as soft-power strategy in promoting national interests.
- ii. To investigate how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests.
- iii. To analyse the effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest.

1.5 Literature Review

Theoretical and empirical research is both discussed in this section. Theoretical literature is important because it has been used to investigate fundamental issues about the role of culture as a soft-power tactic for furthering national goals. Empirical literature is also relevant for this research because it helped in identify the study's major information gaps.

1.5.1 Theoretical Literature Review

This section examines theories that are important to the research. This includes; Cultural Capital Theory and Soft Power Theory.

1.5.1.1 Cultural Capital Theory

Cultural capital theory as a concept was first coined by Jean-Claude Passeron and Pierre Bourdieu.¹⁰ The scholars describe cultural capital as consisting of all the symbolic and material resources that a society perceives as rare and is worth seeking. Cultural capital also includes cultural knowledge that confers power and social status within an economy of practices where it used for social relations. Cultural capital can be divided into three types: institutionalised cultural capital, objectified cultural capital, and embodied cultural capital. According to Adler and Pouliot, cultural capital theory in international relations can provide concrete ways of analysing the existing interplays between material and symbolic resources that make a contribution to a state's sovereignty.¹¹ Also, the complementarity and commonality of cultures provides a critical base by which harmony is attained in the international system.

1.5.1.2 Soft Power Theory

In the late 1980s, Joseph Nye coined the term "soft power," which he defined as the ability to co-opt and entice rather than coerce. According to Nye, the currency of soft power consists of foreign policies, political values, culture and involves moulding the preferences of others through appealing and attracting. Soft power tools, according to Codevilla, are assets that can attract people

¹⁰ Passeron, J. & Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction*. Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education: Cambridge University Press. p. 52

¹¹ Adler, E & Pouliot, V. (2011). *International Practices*. International Theory 3(1): 1-36

and contribute to concessions.¹² According to the scholar, governments find soft power to be a far more difficult instrument to wield than hard power because most of their critical resources are out of reach, and soft power also functions indirectly in managing and accomplishing the intended objectives. Soft power, for example, is a descriptive phrase rather than a normative one, according to Nye, and it is merely one sort of power that delivers the intended effects.¹³

1.5.2 Empirical Literature Review

The empirical literature review is thematic based on the study's three objectives, which are as follows: to examine how culture is perceived in the international system as soft-power strategy in promoting national interests, to investigate how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests and lastly to determine the effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest.

1.5.2.1 Perception of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting national interests of states in the international system

Holden notes that many states around the globe are waking up to the realisation that culture is a soft-power strategy that can be used to pursue national interest.¹⁴ Countries such as China, Russia, and Japan are investing enormous sums of money on cultural institutions and international broadcasting in order to expand their influence and international reach. Many states have come to the realisation that in today's information age, having deep educational and cultural connections around the world matters if they are to achieve influence, prosperity and security. Culture's soft

¹² Codevilla, A., (2008). *Political Warfare: A Set of Means for Achieving Political Ends*. IWP press.

¹³ Nye, J. (2011). *The Future of Power*. New York: Public Affairs.

¹⁴ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

power systems are thought to be well suited to coping with globalisation's conditions. A major justification is that they give various governments the reach to global information networks, global markets and global travel.¹⁵

Radcliffe posits that cultural interchange can assist in maintaining traditional state to state relations and provides a forum by which like-minded states can coordinate their activities, shape their agendas and set rules for multiple regimes that characterise the modern international system.¹⁶

States also perceive culture as an instrument of diplomacy which they can communicate with other states via the media and internet in hope of shaping perceptions and their environment. According to Holden, policymakers are increasingly recognizing the importance of culture as a soft power strategy as they recognize that international politics is becoming more about "whose tale" in the same way that economic and military dominance are critical.¹⁷ Governments can no longer simply afford to let the international images of their states be shaped by outsiders.

Brzezinski notes that the mechanisms associated with culture as a soft power are regarded as legitimate ways by which international relations is conducted.¹⁸ The current international system is more welcoming to co-opt power as an alternative to command power which is increasingly regarded with mistrust and suspicion. Soft power strategies such as culture are considered to be positive in their impact and more benign as compared to hard power approaches which can hurt the reputation and status of a state. The United States, for example, suffered a legitimacy crisis and a loss of reputation as a result of its overt dependence on hard power, especially during the invasion

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Radcliffe, S. (2006). *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World*. Geographies, actors, and paradigms, Routledge, New York, pp. 36-7.

¹⁷ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

¹⁸ Brzezinski, Z. (2004). *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership*. New York City, Carnegie Council Books for Breakfast.

of Iraq, the Vietnam War, and the global war on terrorism.¹⁹ Brzezinski, on the other hand, believes that in today's world, hard power is no longer obsolete, and that no amount of soft power can persuade North Korea or Iran to give up their nuclear weapons if they are unwilling to engage.

Darwin contends that history has shown that soft and hard power needs to complement each other in order to achieve the desired outcomes.²⁰ For example, the British Empire could not have been sustained by hard power alone and co-option was a crucial component. In contrast, the former Soviet Union's demise was partially due to its inability to effectively mix soft and hard force. Many countries, however, have taken major steps to improve their soft power capabilities rather than their hard power skills, which is expected. China particularly has been proactive in this regard by becoming more active in traditional diplomacy by notably establishing more than 300 Confucius Institutes in foreign countries in order to promote Chinese culture and language.²¹

1.5.2.2 The application of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting national interests

According to Bitsani, many countries have adopted various programs and initiatives geared towards applying culture as a soft power strategy in promoting national interests.²² Certain programs have involved state-sponsored initiatives intended to enlighten foreign nationals through exhibitions, distribution of brochures, pamphlets, books, and magazines. The primary motive behind all this has always been to diffuse information and earn favourable attitudes from foreign states. Anheier believes various states have been applying culture as a soft power strategy to promote their national image, influence international organizations, control international rules and

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Darwin, J. (2009). *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

²¹ Bates, G. and Huang, Y. (2006). *Sources and Limits of Chinese "Soft Power"*. *Survival*. 48 (2), p. 17-36.

²² Bitsani, E. (2004). *Cultural Management and Regional Development, Planning Cultural Policy and Cultural Product*. Dionikos: Athens, Greece.

enhance their native culture.²³ A good national image, rich cultural heritage and compliance with international rules all appeals to the foreign, promotes cultural identity, national identity, and invents a corporate identity which has benefits for enterprise investments.²⁴

Samuel and Gareth report that many countries are beginning to embrace culture as a soft power and are applying it in the promotion of national interests due to its potential value.²⁵ After a series of wars overshadowed its soft power capabilities, the United States, for example, moved to restore its global reputation through cultural exchange programs. Such programmes have included the “100, 000 Strong Initiative” encouraging Americans to learn Mandarin. The country has also committed to humanitarian assistance by for example channelling significant funds in the battle against HIV/AIDS in Africa.²⁶ Apart from the United States, China has also been applying its rich cultural heritage to reach new audiences in the global arena. Through its Ministry of Culture, the country has set up China Cultural Centres (CCC) in a number of major cities around the world. The existing network of CCC supports multilateral cultural exchange and showcases Chinese culture through performances, lectures, exhibitions, and library services. China has also established more than 1000 Confucius Classrooms and language hubs in foreign schools to help young children experience Chinese culture and learn Mandarin.²⁷

²³ Anheier, H. (2007). *The Culture and Globalization Series*. SAGE Publications Ltd: London, UK.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Samuel, R. and Gareth, J. (2014). *Culture, Ideology and Politics: Essays for Hobsbawn*. Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Bates, G. and Huang, Y. (2006). *Sources and Limits of Chinese “Soft Power”*. *Survival*. 48 (2), p. 17-36.

1.5.2.3 The effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting national interest

Mulcahy argues that culture's success as a soft-power strategy derives from the idea that nations affect one another.²⁸ The culture of one nation can make an impact on another nation's culture. This can be referred to as an interchange of culture between societies as opposed to an interchange between people to people, government to government or political contact across borders. Non-political interchange of culture witnessed between states has occurred in various ways including personal interchange through tourism and immigration, commercial interchange through transportation and trade, media interchange through magazines, books, TV, movies, and information conveyance.²⁹ Gibson notes that the provision of simple, fast, and cheap devices of communication through technology has made cultural interchange between states expand rapidly and has been an aiding factor as far as culture as a soft power is concerned.³⁰ Transnational media networks have become important actors in cultural exchange and are not merely just mediums. The increasingly larger role of the media and mass communication in world community has made culture more significant in states relations.

Flew posits that the conveying of cultures and numerous contacts between states has invariably led to people developing various attitudes, feelings and images about other countries.³¹ Cultural exchanges between states has manifested themselves in people's minds as prejudices, knowledge, illusions and stereotypes. Some of these impressions have been long lasting and profound, others have been superficial, and others have taken a symbolic function. Variations have however existed

²⁸ Mulcahy, K. (2013). *Culture and International Relation*. Praeger Publishers, New York, p. 67-70.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Gibson, M. (2007). *Culture and power: A history of cultural studies*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.

³¹ Flew, T. (2012). *The creative industries, culture and policy*. London, England: SAGE.

between nations in their willingness and capacity to receive foreign culture and equally in their willingness and capacity to export culture.³²

Culture has also served to enhance global integration and cooperation over the past few decades' thus unlocking shared benefits of stability, prosperity and sustainability. Iwabuchi posits that in the context of the globalized world, multiculturalism has been promoted globally through cultural exchange.³³ Economic globalization in particular has had profound impacts on multiculturalism. Impacts which can be summed up on two trends; first trend is that it has led to the emergence of popular culture and industrial culture; and second it has accelerated modernization in developing countries. The emergence of an industrial culture and modernization has triggered large-scale mass consumption inclusive of cultural consumption. Popular culture on the other hand has surged to unprecedented levels and prompting its adoption in developing states.³⁴

1.6 Literature gap

The study having made an empirical literature review on how culture is perceived in the international system, how culture is applied as a soft-power strategy and its effectiveness in promoting national interest finds that abundant literature exists on western and eastern world cultures but finds minimal literature on African developing countries. Empirical studies on African culture as a soft power is limited and therefore a literature gap is found to exist.

³² Clarke, D. (2014). *Theorizing the role of cultural products in cultural diplomacy from a cultural studies perspective*. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 22, 147-163.

³³ Iwabuchi, K. (2015). *Pop-culture diplomacy. Soft power, nation branding and the question of international cultural exchange*. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 21, 419-432.

³⁴ Ibid.

1.7 Justification of the Study

This study proposes three broad justifications: policy, academic, and general public.

1.7.1 Academic Justification

Although the research agrees with previous research on some of the same subjects, such as the role of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interests, it is crucial since it aided academic studies and expand earlier research on the topic. Second, the analysis pointed out to areas where more research is needed in the discourse of cultural diplomacy and its role in furthering national interests. Furthermore, the literature review reveals a dearth of knowledge about the importance of culture as a soft-power strategy in advancing Kenya's national interests. As a result, the aim of this research is to help close the gap.

1.7.2 Policy Justification

Policymakers have been hesitant to acknowledge the importance of culture as a soft power tactic for furthering Kenya's national objectives. This research provided policymakers with in-depth knowledge on the role culture plays as a soft-power strategy in advancing national interests. Finally, the study's policy importance is solely dependent on how the results are applied. The findings of this study will serve as a basis for policy development, planning, and implementation by decision makers.

1.7.3 General public justification

Culture will be fully comprehended by the public as a soft-power approach for promoting Kenya's national interests if the findings of this study are taken into consideration by policymakers during the policy-making process. This is because the study examined the role of culture as a soft power

tactic in promoting Kenya's national interests and give recommendations on how to employ cultural diplomacy to achieve Kenya's objectives.

1.8 Research Hypotheses

The hypothesis provides an empirically testable variable that serves as a reference for the data gathered in order to meet the study's objectives. As a result, the following hypothesis was included in the data collection:

1. If culture is perceived in the international system as soft-power strategy, it can promote national interests.
2. Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests; hence culture has helped in promotion of its national interests.
3. Kenyan Culture is effective as a soft-power strategy hence it has been used in pursuing of its national interests.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses Soft Power Theory as the analytical tool of the study.

1.9.1 Soft Power Theory

In order to analyse the function of culture as a soft power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interests, the study used soft power theory as the theoretical framework. Soft power as a concept is initiated through political, culture and diplomatic powers. Joseph Nye coined the term "soft power" and in the late 1980s, defining it as the ability to co-opt and attract rather than coerce. Joseph Nye is the key proponent of soft power theory. According to Nye, as a political power, soft power is initiated through social stability, strategic goals, national cohesion, and national

leadership system.³⁵ The key tenet of this theory according to Nye, is that nations should obtain their preferred outcomes by attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or payment. As a cultural power it includes the people's traditions, way of life and beliefs. As a diplomatic power it consists of foreign policy, foreign relations and foreign activity. Nye concludes that the new world system is interdependent and states actors need to leverage their influence by whatever tools those are at their disposal.³⁶ Soft power is therefore perceived currently as the most dominant power in international relations and the primary base by which nations influence the behaviour of other nations. The present study's theoretical framework therefore employed the theory to investigate how Kenya utilises its soft power to influence both domestic and foreign interests.

1.10 Research Methodology

Under the study's methodology, a detailed explanation of how the research objectives were investigated is provided.

1.10.1 Research Design

A research design consists of a collection of conditions or sets, as well as the methods and procedures for gathering and analysing data on the variables described in the study topic. A mixed-methods case study design was used in the study, which included both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The descriptive data was collected and managed using the qualitative methodology. Qualitative method was used to evaluate qualitative elements such as the respondents' attitudes and views, which do not have standard metrics. The quantitative method, on the other hand, was

³⁵ Nye, J. (2011). *The Future of Power*. New York: Public Affairs

³⁶ Ibid.

used to collect and manage numerical data that was used to quantify disparities, predict relationships, and identify characteristics.

1.10.2 Study Location

Kenya, officially known as the Republic of Kenya, is an East African country. Kenya has a total land size of 48 million square kilometres, making it the world's 48th largest country. According to the 2019 census, the country's population is anticipated to be above 47.6 million people. International organizations based in Kenya include the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

1.10.3 Target Population

The study's target population was Kenyans. The study included representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage, and the Ministry of Tourism.

1.10.4 Sampling technique and sampling Design

The study's response rate was calculated using the Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) method for calculating a population of more than 10,000 people.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where:

N is the number of people who should be included in the sample.

z = the standard normal deviation at the specified degree of confidence

p = the estimated proportion of people in the target population who have the traits being measured.

$$q = 1 - p$$

d = level of statistical significance set

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (.50) (.50)}{(0.5)^2}$$
$$= 384.$$

The following table depicts the study sample.

Table 1.1: Study Population and Sampling Methodology

Respondents	Number of Respondents	Sampling technique
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	304	Random sampling
Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage	50	Simple Random
Scholars	10	Purposive sampling
Ministry of Tourism	20	Random
TOTAL	384	

Source: Researcher, 2021.

The four categories listed in table 1.1 represented the sample. As shown in the table above, different sample approaches were used for each category.

1.10.5 Data Sources and Data Collection Methods

Primary and secondary data was used in the investigation. Primary data was collected using open-ended questionnaires and interview guides, while secondary data was gathered through academic books, journals, periodicals, reports, and the internet. Print media as well as publications from important non-profit organizations were considered.

1.10.6 Reliability of data collection instruments

The consistency with which a system tests thing is described as reliability. The measurement is accurate if it can provide the same results under the same conditions using the same processes. When a liquid sample's temperature is measured several times under comparable conditions and the thermometer consistently displays the same temperature, the results are accurate.

1.10.7 Validity of data collection instruments

This is the accuracy with which an instrument estimates the object it is designed to measure. Validities to consider include material validity, construct validity, and criterion validity. As a result, the investigation employed tools that exactly calculate the required elements.

1.10.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

Qualitative methodologies were used to analyse the data acquired in the field. The information was organized into topics that are relevant to the study topics. The replies to the questionnaire will be coded, tabulated, and analysed using social science statistical software (SPSS).

1.10.9 Ethical Considerations

To ensure the confidentiality of participants' information and identities, the study took all possible safeguards. The project will also apply for a NACOST research license. As a result, Kenyan research legislation controlled the investigation. Furthermore, by identifying the authors, origins of all content and references that were mentioned in the research, the research retained intellectual integrity and neutrality.

1.10.10 Scope and Limitations of the study

This research looks into how Kenya has used culture as a soft power technique to advance its national goals, ignoring any other soft power methods Kenya may be employing. Because of the current Covid19 outbreak, the study communicated with participants via email and Google questionnaire to avoid physical touch.

1.11 Chapter Outline

Chapter one: introduces and contextualizes the subject. It also establishes the overall background of the research project, as well as the issue statement, justification, theoretical framework, literature evaluation, hypothesis, and research methods.

Chapter two: This chapter focused on the study's first objective, which is to analyse how culture is viewed as a soft-power tactic in promoting national interests in the international system.

Chapter three: This chapter endeavours to investigate how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests.

Chapter four: This chapter concentrated on the study's third objective, which is to determine the efficacy of culture as a soft-power approach for promoting Kenya's national interests.

Chapter Five: The study's Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations were covered in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

CULTURE AS A SOFT POWER STRATEGY FOR THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL INTERESTS

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of the study, including its background, aims, theoretical literature review, empirical literature, and methods. The present chapter examines how culture is perceived in the international system as a soft power strategy in promoting national interests. Culture is usually one of the factors behind national interests that countries opt to pursue. As a factor, it plays a role as a soft power strategy that nations use in promoting national interests and exerting their influence.

2.1 Culture as a Soft Power

Culture is known to shape ideas and serves as an instrument by which occurrences around people can be analysed. It also offers people ways of seeing, thinking, and interpreting the things around them. The legacy of a state's cultural heritage and history has a significant impact on its external affairs. Frode asserts that states inherit culture which in turn influences their interests and the course of action they take to pursue those interests in relation to other states.³⁷ The approach a nation therefore takes to address its external problems is therefore determined by its belief and traditional values which have developed over the years. In general, nations with a unified culture find it easier to pursue common interests since an overwhelming majority of their citizens have common perceptions and share similar experiences. Countries with divergent cultures however find it difficult to pursue their interests in collaboration with foreign states.³⁸

³⁷ Frode, L., (1993). *Culture and Foreign Policy: An Introduction to Approaches and Theory*. American Political Science Review 99:107-123.

³⁸ Moshfegh, M., (2008). *Cultural Power*. Etemade Melli Printing and Publishing.

In the context of soft power, culture is considered a set of practices that lead to the creation of meaning for a society.³⁹ National culture, broadly defined as beliefs, norms, values, and behavioural patterns of a state has increasingly become important as they have been shown to impact on major economic activities ranging from national capital structure to the gross domestic product (GDP). One of culture's most important contributions to the public diplomacy of a country is the ability it has in showcasing the diversity of opinions, perspectives and views. Culture is critical in shaping public opinion and strengthening a country's reputation as it leads to a better knowledge of other countries' ideals. It also has an influence on the level of acceptance or resistance to change because certain cultural values can hinder or facilitate change. Change is usually first observed in the behavior of people and in the long term when the new behavioural styles have been shared across all groups, they trickle down to deeper levels of cultural values and are represented nationally.⁴⁰

Anholt contends that the cultural aspect of a national image is irreplaceable since it shows the intellectual and spiritual qualities of a country's institutions and its people.⁴¹ As a result, certain attempts at measuring and utilizing a country's soft power are made. Culture as a soft power is perceived as a commonly silent weapon that countries can use to gain soft control over other nations through the application of non-violent means to engender mutual understanding and promote relationships. This is in line with Soft power theory which asserts that currently the most dominant power in international relations and the primary base by which nations influence the behaviour of other nations. The purpose of promoting culture by countries has therefore always

³⁹ Nye, J. (2004). *Soft Power: The means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

⁴⁰ Gibson, M. (2007). *Culture and power: A history of cultural studies*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.

⁴¹ Anholt, S. (2007). *Competitive Identity. The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.

been perceived as a goal of influencing foreign audience. The function of culture as a soft power, according to Weller, is to entice foreigners to have a favourable opinion of a country's people, government, and culture. This in turn induces greater cooperation among nations and helps in changing and managing policies and the political environment in the international system.⁴² Joseph Nye's soft power theory discusses how ideas, identity, and culture are significant building blocks that states use to relate and understand each other. More importantly, the theory acknowledges nation's capacity to interact based on respected, shared norms and identities. According to Hayden, the value of a country's soft power is determined by how it acknowledges traditional soft power measurements in the international system while also taking into account ideational elements.⁴³ As far as ideational factors are concerned, the scholar notes that the cultural beliefs nations possess can influence or constrain the ability of foreign states to effect change upon them.

Holden observes that the concept of attraction is the key idea behind culture as a soft power and is based on nations getting what they want by inducing foreign nations to want what the nation possesses.⁴⁴ The idea is founded on the sense that a country is considered attractive when it for example has a highly popular film or culture, a high cultural brand, or a language that others state regard highly for its utility in negotiations in the global marketplace. Culture, as a soft power, has the ability to overcome prejudices and tensions between governments, according to the professor. It can also foster an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding amongst nations and regions. It is thus a channel via which nations can establish tolerant and peaceful contact, communication, and cooperation. Cooperation for instance is highly valued by many states and for it to operate successfully, it operates at two main levels, namely domestically and internationally.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Hayden, C., (2011). *The Rhetoric of Soft Power: Public Diplomacy in Global Contexts*. Lanham, MD: Lexington.

⁴⁴ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

Domestically it operates across governments, and between domestic stakeholders and governments. Domestic stakeholders include cultural organizations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), research centres and many more. Internationally, cooperation occurs between governments either bilaterally or multilaterally. A cultural relation therefore necessitates close alignment between domestic and international divide. Signs exist that countries are beginning to genuinely adopt strategic cultural relations as a sign of international collaboration and an overall strategy to global engagement and promotion of interests.⁴⁵

Cultural relations have been found to work best when they seek to create credible collaborations for mutual benefit. This is founded on the idea that collaboration in the cultural sphere contributes to not only the awareness of another states culture but also builds trust. Cultural interactions between nations, according to Fraser, enhance mutual respect and understanding, more tolerance, and help nations interact in a new spirit driven by the acknowledgment of rising global interdependence and a shared understanding of future challenges and threats.⁴⁶ Konsola contends that culture remains a significant resource for the soft power capacity of a nation.⁴⁷ A cultural relation builds upon relations, trust, and credibility among nations over the long-term and is particularly important when formal relations between nations is strained or damaged. While cultural relations do not have the capacity to compensate for misguided behaviour or unpopular policies, it can forge emotional connections between societies and possibly heal divisions. The facilitative role of cultural relations is usually performed by governments and government institutions. They do this by issuing lenient tax regimes, providing funding and subsidies, and

⁴⁵ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

⁴⁶ Fraser, M., (2003). *Weapons of Mass Distraction: Soft Power and American Empire*. New York: Thomas Dunne.

⁴⁷ Konsola, A. (2006). *Cultural Development and Politics*; Papazisi: Athens, Greece.

implementing legislations directed specifically at maintaining an environment in which cultural organisations can promote national programmes and interests.

Huntington and Harrison aver that countries use cultural exchange programs as a medium through which they can create impression with foreign countries and in turn gain outsider approval and understanding of their cultural practices.⁴⁸ This compliments the argument put forward by soft power theory that culture has been used by countries as an instrument of influence. For instance Confucius institute has recently been established across the world to spread the Chinese culture across its borders.⁴⁹ Generally, culture as a soft power is perceived to be advantageous to a nation in understanding the foreign nations they seek to engage with and thereby foster relationships of mutual understanding. However, the results registered out of the use of culture as a soft power is never short term in nature and usually bears less specific focus on policy related matters. When nations use culture as a soft power for particular policy related matters the obvious intent is usually to build influence over the long-term and engage with the people of a country directly. Such use has been noted to have implications ranging from promoting tourism and commercial opportunities to matters of national security. This allows governments to establish foundations of trust and mutual understanding that is based upon people to people contact and is neutral. Kazemi and Asghar also posit that culture as a soft power has the ability to plant the seeds of ideas, spiritual perceptions, political arguments and a general viewpoint of a foreign state that may not otherwise flourish if they chose not to showcase it.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Huntington, S., & Harrison, L., (2000). *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Kazemi, A., & Asghar, M., (2008). *The Role of Power in the Society and International Relations*. Tehran: Ghoms Publishing.

According to Holden, the acuity of culture as a soft power is first and foremost a demonstration of a nation's power as it highlights every aspect of life to a foreign audience including wealth, technology and scientific advances.⁵¹ Similarly, one of the respondents of the study stated that "culture contributes to economic development, for instance tourists are attracted to one's adorable culture that is distinct from that of other countries hence this enables a country to gain more revenue through tourism. For example the Maasai community culture has been the biggest attraction to tourists because of their clothing, Jewellery, shoes and also their songs and dances".⁵² It also showcases competitiveness in everything ranging from sports, military power, industry and the country's overall confidence. Culture therefore has some significant level of implications in guaranteeing a nation's interests and in particular promotion of economic development. The fact that as a soft power it encompasses philosophical and political arguments and employs the language of advocacy and persuasion, it can be used to achieve the traditional goals of political warfare.⁵³ The scholar also notes that while culture as a soft power may not help a nation solve all the challenges it faces in the hard power domain, it can help a nation increase its prestige, explain itself to the world, and encourage respect from the international community.⁵⁴

Baldwin argues that in the contemporary international system, culture increasingly plays an important role in international relations.⁵⁵ This phenomenon stems from a broad connectivity in human values that culture possesses. Culture entails how societies come to understand other societies and is an innate aspect of life that societies seek out and enjoy. Cultural exchanges

⁵¹ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

⁵² Study Respondent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2nd July 2021.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

⁵⁵ Baldwin, D., (2000). Power and International Relations. In: Carlsnaes, W, Risse, T. and Simmons, B. Thousand Oaks. Handbook of International Relations. California: Sage, pp.177-91.

therefore offer opportunities for nations to not only appreciate commonalities among them but also understand differences and exert influences on domestic and international exchanges. Such points make cultural exportation a significant medium of negotiation and a standard of exchange for finding a collective solution among nations. This concurs with study respondent who asserted that “Kenyan Culture is heterogeneous and sharing it can unite different communities not only within the country, but it can also be done overseas through establishment Kenya’s cultural institute abroad to promote cultural exchange globally just as the Chinese are doing with Confucius institutes”.⁵⁶ Throsby adds that cultural exportation has become an open channel by which countries with jeopardized political connections negotiate and recalibrate relationships between them.⁵⁷

2.2 Factors of Culture as a Soft Power

Culture is commonly recognized as a communal phenomenon resulting from learning and meaning building from a shared social legacy, environment, art, ideal, norms, rituals, and beliefs. Morgenthau perceives culture to be a form of capital that can be utilised by individuals, groups or states to modify their existing position or the position of others in a social order.⁵⁸ According to the scholar, since the start of the 19th century, governments have been using culture to foster their national interests in the international arena through the promotion of their own language, media, music and views. It has thus been recognized in the international system that cultural borderlands exist and is a means through which different cultures interact. Some of the factors that have been noted to strengthen a nation’s culture as a soft power includes propagating excellent values and

⁵⁶ Study respondent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21st June 2021.

⁵⁷ Throsby, C. (2001). *Economics and Culture*. Cambridge University Press, UK.

⁵⁸ Morgenthau, H. (2005). *Politics among Nations: Striving for Power cuand Peace*. Tehran: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Printing and Publishing Institute.

ideals, designing and implementing favourable policies and strategies, steering cultural exchanges and relations, fostering specific ideological status, forming and controlling public thoughts, getting rid of negative historical mentalities, acquiring progressive scientific and technological positions, and presenting a desired image of self.⁵⁹ Additionally, keeping and observing human rights standards, involvement in humanitarian services, supporting green movements and the environment, wide presence in cultural consultations, participation in peace-keeping forces and peace movements, and development of friendship associations with different countries have been found to be effective in establishing and strengthening culture as a soft power.

Certain scholars like Kazemi and Asghar mention some other effective factors that can produce and strengthen a nation's cultural soft power.⁶⁰ Some of these factors include industrial capacity, scientific and technological talents, initiatives, inventions, national spirit, leadership wisdom, and geographical status i.e., population, geopolitical status, climate, human resources, and extent of territory.⁶¹

In the realms of international policy, customs and traditions, culture is considered a form of soft power. According to Huntington & Harrison, in examining culture as a soft power, culture is considered an outcome of self-justifying presentation, the product of positive imagination, and the acquisition of credibility in international public thoughts.⁶² Soft Power theory contends that countries achieve soft power when they are able to use wisdom and information to occupy the mental space of another country through attraction. The theory extends further by noting that cultural power is applied by a country when it makes others to desire what they also want and they

⁵⁹ Nye, J (2003). *Application of Soft Power*, translated by Seyed Reza Mir. Tehran: Ghoms Publishing.

⁶⁰ Kazemi, A., & Asghar, M., (2008). *The Role of Power in the Society and International Relations*. Tehran: Ghoms Publishing.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Huntington, S., & Harrison, L., (2000). *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.

achieve this indirectly through tools like ideals and ethical values. It can therefore be considered that the features and checks of culture as a soft power are engrained in their popularity and informality. From another perspective, culture as a soft power can initiate local, regional, and transnational dialogue with the public and portray messages in the international system without the orders and limitations of hard power. Cultural power that is thus attained by states through such means should however not be mistaken with populism.⁶³

According to Schneider, the various tools utilised by nations in employing culture as a soft power include exhibitions, arts, educational programs, broadcasting of cultural programs, exchanges, and gifts to a foreign nation.⁶⁴ The scholar points out those arts include dance, music, sculpture, and painting. Their exhibition offers the opportunity to showcase the numerous objects of culture that a nation possess. Educational programs include language and universities programs offered abroad. Importantly, exchange aspects range from artistic, scientific, and educational, while the area of literature entails development of libraries abroad and the translation of popular works. Another key tool is the broadcast of cultural programs. Gifts to a foreign nation are considered as demonstrating respect and a form of thoughtfulness.⁶⁵ All of the aforementioned cultural soft power tools aim to improve international knowledge of a country's culture. The tools are mostly not created or fashioned by a government, but are shaped by culture which the government plays a role in facilitating its conveyance to a foreign audience through influence.

Almond & Sidney note that through popular pressure, culture has in the past influenced government actions and how leaders make decisions.⁶⁶ Culture definitely has a political aspect to

⁶³ Moshfegh, M., (2008). *Cultural Power*. Etemade Melli Printing and Publishing.

⁶⁴ Schneider, P., (2007). *The Unrealised Potential of Culture*. The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society, Vol. 39:4 pp. 260-278

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Almond, G., & Sidney, V., (1980). *The Civil Culture Revisited*. Boston, MA: Little & Brown

it because it is usually an underlying factor behind social and individual actions and it has an effect on political behaviour. In any given political unit, a major part of the influencing factors is related to cultural norms and system of values such as ideological and religious status, national spirit, moralities, national beliefs and values, and generally national nature and manner. Culture is considered an important national soft power resource that can be evaluated based on the rate of cultural assumptions and majorly on cultural priorities and preferences. For example, ideal political values of Islamic countries or ideal liberal values of western countries can attract or repel other political units due to cultural assumptions or preferences. An important thing is the alignment between a country's political ideals with that of the international system.⁶⁷ Immaterial power resources such as ideology, culture, and institutions, according to soft power theory, have an impact on countries' choices, interests, and preferences. The political principles, culture, and foreign policy of a country are the three main sources of soft power. A country can pursue its interests and goals without resorting to explicit inducements or coercion out of the attraction that sources of soft power create. Nye explains that when a country portrays favourable qualities and values, other states are also likely to start admiring and emulating those qualities and values. A problem that arises however is that what is often perceived as right and legitimate is never by any means universal and is heavily dependent on specific cultural, historical, and social preconceptions that is interpreted by others.

Huntington & Harrison contend that a country's political legitimacy in the international system can be effective in establishing and strengthening its cultural soft power.⁶⁸ As a country's political legitimacy increases, the rate of international collaborations is appropriately developed because

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Huntington, S., & Harrison, L., (2000). *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.

other political units identify its goals and priorities through mutual cultural exchanges and collaborations. The rate of political legitimacy of a country is elevated when other political units get a perspective of the country's public participation in decision making, elections and demonstrations. In the contemporary world, culture is considered by many as a kind of divergence in global policy and because of the effect of other countries political actions. The area of international relations is therefore adversely affected by cultural and identity factors. An example is how western hegemony is currently being challenged by two non-western powers, namely Confucius or Chinese civilization and Islamic civilization.⁶⁹

2.3 Culture and the Promotion of National Interests

Holden avers that by nations showcasing their cultural heritage in the international arena, it offers them a chance to not only demonstrate their identity and create a positive international image but also helps them attain their political goals.⁷⁰ In a study to determine how nations can utilise culture as soft power to translate into political, economic, and social benefits, the scholar found out that the advancement of culture and political morals by nations on the world stage has the potential of bringing substantial strategic and economic rewards. The study ascertained that when a state uses culture as a soft power, they can witness significant impact in tourism, overseas student recruitment, foreign direct investment, and influence in international forums like those convened in the General Assembly by the UN.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Holden, J., (2013). *Culture as a Component of International Relations*. The Journal of International Affairs. Vol. 80, No. 5,

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Holden, J., (2013). *Culture as a Component of International Relations*. The Journal of International Affairs. Vol. 80, No. 5,

Historically, it has indeed been felt that culture and national interests are closely linked and make up the identities by which nations are perceived. Kiyono posits that culture and national interests in the international system denotes the aspirations and inclination of states as autonomous units.⁷² The scholar thinks that national interests can be defined in terms of how they are developed. Certain national interests are driven by necessity, while others are legitimately desired by governments. There are those national interests that are also changeable and are dictated by situations but since nation states are also constantly transforming, the interplay existing between states and their national interest also keeps on changing both in space and time.⁷³ The basic typologies under which national interests fall are primary and secondary national interests. Primary national interests are the vital national interests that influence a nation's physical existence as a free, independent state that protects its people, institutions, and fundamental values. On the other hand, secondary national interests refer to those interests that a state may opt to compromise and negotiate. The pursuit of secondary interests characteristically poses no significant threat to the autonomy of a state and therefore, the notion of culture has come to be associated with the pursuit and promotion of a nation's secondary interests.⁷⁴

A scholar like Morgenthau has demarcated national interests further into smaller units initiating both permanent and temporary interests. The scholar further avers that under both permanent and temporary, national interests can further be categorized as general, specific, complementary and conflicting. Permanent interests are perceived as generally unending while temporary interests are those that the state considers as its current interests. In the same vein, specific interests are those that a state tailors to address certain policy issues while general interest are those that the state

⁷² Kiyono, K. (1969). *A Study on the Concept of the National Interests of Hans J. Morgenthau as the Standard of American Foreign Policy*. NAOSITE, 49(3), 1-20.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

applies in positive light while dealing with other states.⁷⁵ Mulcahy reports that the international environment has an important role to play in influencing the national interest of every state.⁷⁶ Cultural interactions that occur among states in the international environment cannot therefore be ignored in analysing the national interests of foreign states. Some of the factors in the international environment that influence culture and how nations opt to pursue their national interests include but are not limited to the international power structure, international organizations, international law, and international alliances.

Jian posits that ever since the modern state system came into existence with the signing of the 1648 treaty of Westphalia, the international power structure has come to consist of small, middle, and big powers.⁷⁷ The cultural interaction of these states takes place on a global scale, and as a result, it plays a significant role in moulding and shaping the interacting states' national interests. One of the fundamental goals of cultural exchanges has been to develop cooperative and amicable ties among governments, and a state's relative position in the international system has a significant impact on national interests. During the 1980s, the international power structure was characterised by a bi-polar power system as was witnessed during the Cold War, however, presently a unipolar power system exists with the US as the only eminent hegemonic power. Such a shift in the international power structure has also impacted global cultural relations.

Holden notes that culture, like other forms of soft power used by states has been affected by radical changes witnessed in the 21st century.⁷⁸ Shocks witnessed in the international order, the onslaught

⁷⁵ Morgenthau, H., & Thompson, K., (1993). *Politics among nations: The struggle for power and peace*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

⁷⁶ Mulcahy, K. (2013). *Culture and International Relation*. Praeger Publishers, New York, p. 67-70.

⁷⁷ Jian, H. (2001). *The Competition for Soft Power: Trends of Cultural Competition in the Context of Globalization*. China Higher Education Press.

⁷⁸ Holden, J. (2013). *Influence and attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*. London, England: Routledge.

of internet-based communication, and legitimacy challenges for liberal governments seem to have made a re-orientation on how nations employ culture as a soft power for pursuing their interests. Achievements made out of the use of culture as a soft power are measured by states along a line of predetermined guidelines and are also judged according to the value of the interests achieved or have failed to be realized. Radcliffe reports that the effects of globalization have made the role of culture even more significant in promoting national interests.⁷⁹ The rapid process by which globalization has taken place has had the capacity to strengthen and transform cultures. Globalization has not only led to the dispersion of cultures in the entire world, but has also led to the unification of a global culture. The unification of a global culture means states are developing a global identity and a sense of belonging to a global culture through the adoption of certain styles, practices, and information that are part of a worldwide culture. In recent times, the number of states trying to exert or are exerting geopolitical influence is increasing, and the areas upon which geopolitical competition takes place has expanded. Ironically, the rise in global competition is leading to calls for increased co-operation among states and in turn the areas upon which co-operation are taking place is subsequently expanding. Bitsani also posits that the existence of international law and norms has also impacted on cultural relations between states and how they pursue national interests.⁸⁰ International law is constituted by interstate treaties and agreements and thus does not entirely favour cultural interactions among states and how they pursue national interests. International law regulates how states pursue their interests and it subsequently regulates their foreign policy.

⁷⁹ Radcliffe, S., (2006). *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World*. Geographies, actors, and paradigms, Routledge, New York, pp. 37-7

⁸⁰ Bitsani, E. (2004). *Cultural Management and Regional Development, Planning Cultural Policy and Cultural Product*. Dionikos: Athens, Greece.

According to Keohane, culture is usually one of the factors behind national interests that countries opt to pursue.⁸¹ As a factor, it usually plays a role under certain conditions which may evolve over time or undergo change as it exerts its influence. Culture has been found to affect national interests in two different ways, namely, by constituting national interests and by regulating national interests. When it constitutes national interests, it does so by delineating interests that are worth pursuing and those that are not worth pursuing. When it serves as a regulatory function, it is grounded on norms and principles that a state relies on to decide what can be done or not be done. For example, laws regarding human rights are meant to protect the citizenry from abuse by governments even when such abuse would aid governments easily get rid of political opponents.⁸² Below is an in-depth discussion of culture's constitutive and regulatory function:

2.4 Culture's Constitutive Function

Culture's constitutive function entails the creation of a foreign state's cultural identity by another state. Foucault charges that while serving a constitutive function, culture's soft power can mediate on political meaning-making between states and frame alternative conditions for pursuing national interests. The scholar also charges that culture's constitutive function is an ongoing process and cannot inherently exist without the cooperation of the other. It also places a lot of emphasis on mutual exchanges and does not solely rely on a single transaction. When an increase on the effectiveness of culture's constitutive function is realised, its spread leads to awareness which almost certainly takes on an ascending path. Such spread and awareness may lead to a virtues cycle

⁸¹ Keohane, R., & Nye, J., (1977). *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. Boston: Little, Brown.

⁸² Ibid.

of further development of culture and inspire more states involvement in the sharing of information and knowledge, and make more efforts at perfecting the already constituted culture.

Anheier also posits that culture's constitutive function can also enhance, maintain, and even create interstate trust.⁸³ The scholar considers such inter-state interactions are usually developed through cultural events that utilise the instrument of culture to promote national interests in politic, economic and social strategic fields. However, if states only rely on cultural events to foster national interests while overlooking trust building, then efforts made through culture's constitutive function may not be effective in promoting national interests.

2.5 Culture's Regulatory Function

The regulatory function of culture entails a state's ability to influence the behavior of a recipient state and its population through the use of external identities. According to Foucault, because power circulates in the international system continuously, each particular state is subjected to it at the same time that it is exerted over it.⁸⁴ From such a perspective, it can be argued that culture entails a repressive apparatus that is used by other states to impose epistemological and aesthetical parameters, taste, lifestyles, positions and worldviews in domestic and international affairs. Culture's regulatory function relies on its ability to impose preferences on others than it would have otherwise done. According to Baldwin, culture's regulatory role is frequently used against the interests of other nations, which makes resistance a possibility in connection to cultures

⁸³ Anheier, H. (2007). *The Culture and Globalization Series*. SAGE Publications Ltd: London, UK.

⁸⁴ Foucault, M., (1983). *The Subject and Power*. In Dreyfus HL and Rabinow P (Eds.) Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp.208-26.

constitutive function.⁸⁵ In order for culture's regulatory function to achieve its objectives, it must be carried out in concert with other cultural resources available to an influencing state.

Samuel and Gareth posit that throughout history, cultural exchange has been intertwined with the pursuit of international relations.⁸⁶ Nations have been using culture to assert their power, portray themselves, and to understand other states. In recent times, culture as a soft power has increased in importance while hard power like military force have become of limited use in recent times. The interchange of cultural expressions, ideas, art, and information between countries has become fundamental for international bodies like the UN in promoting international peace through dialogue and exchange in areas of natural science, communication, education, social and human science. Cultural exchange has become key in addressing challenges of globalization as more nations of the world become interconnected. As a result of globalization, nations increasingly have to find a way of harnessing culture as soft power in order to promote their national interests. According to Bates and Huang, culture as a soft power has also become an indispensable tool in countering systemic damages brought about as a result of conflict in politically unstable societies.⁸⁷ Intercultural discourse and the reverence for cultural diversity amongst nations has been considered to be the most powerful soft power tools by which nations can preserve their heritage and promote development.

Mulcahy concurs that culture is increasingly being used by world leaders and countries to reaffirm their influence, showcase who they are, and foster long lasting relations.⁸⁸ More than ever before,

⁸⁵ Baldwin, D., (2000). *Power and International Relations*. In: Carlsnaes, W, Risse, T. and Simmons, B. Thousand Oaks. Handbook of International Relations. California: Sage, pp.177-91.

⁸⁶ Samuel, R. and Gareth, J. (2014). *Culture, Ideology and Politics: Essays for Hobsbawn*. Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, UK.

⁸⁷ Bates, G. and Huang, Y. (2006) *Sources and Limits of Chinese "Soft Power"*. *Survival*. 48 (2), p. 17-36.

⁸⁸ Mulcahy, K. (2013). *Culture and International Relation*. Praeger Publishers, New York, p. 67-70.

cultural communication among states has become very vital in international relations. This originates from broad and connective principles that culture possesses. In the future, nations are more likely to forge alliances along lines of economic and geographic ties as well as cultural understanding.

2.6 Conclusion

The present chapter has discussed how culture is perceived in the international system as a soft power strategy in promoting national interests. Culture is known to shape ideas and serves as an instrument by which occurrences around people can be analysed. It offers people ways of seeing things, thinking, and interpreting the things in there surrounding. In the context of soft power, culture is considered a set of practices that lead to the creation of meaning for a society. The most important contribution it has to the public diplomacy of a country is the ability it has in showcasing the diversity of opinions, perspectives and views. It plays an essential role in driving public perception and enriching the reputation of a country towards a fuller understanding of other country's values. It has been established that culture affects national interests in two different ways, namely, by constituting national interests and by regulating national interests. When it constitutes national interests, it does so by delineating interests that are worth pursuing and those that are not worth pursuing. When it serves as a regulatory function, it is grounded on norms and principles that a state relies on to decide what can be done or not be done. The next chapter will discuss how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests.

CHAPTER THREE

HOW KENYA HAS APPLIED CULTURE AS A SOFT POWER STRATEGY IN PROMOTING ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS

3.0 Introduction

The last chapter examined how culture is perceived in the international system as a soft-power strategy in promoting national interests. The present chapter now examines how Kenya has applied culture as a soft power strategy in promoting its national interests.

3.1 Kenya's Soft Power and Culture

In the last few decades, Kenya's soft power has increased remarkably in proportion to its direct diplomatic strategies and initiatives. According to soft power theory, soft power is initiated through social stability, strategic goals, national cohesion, and national leadership system.⁸⁹ It has therefore been crucial for the country to apply and optimise its soft power profile in order to promote its national interests. Since the country gained independence in 1961, it has utilised culture as a diplomatic tool which has also been a key pillar in its soft power strategy for promoting its national interests. This concurs with one of the respondents who noted that "Sometimes ago Kenya was branded *Hakuna Matata*, nowadays it is magical Kenya and *Tembea* Kenya which shows our culture hence this has fostered cultural diplomacy that enhanced Kenya image abroad".⁹⁰ Kenya has significant cultural resources in the form of media, art, music, and literature that it has tried to harness in transforming its diplomatic engagement with the international community. Its capital

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Study Respondent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 26th June 2021.

Nairobi, has become a hub for the production of films and music videos, some of which portray the country in positive light.⁹¹

Popular Kenyan music, many of which are broadcasted internationally through social media are cultural products that are a reflection of the country's social standards. Music videos that depict Kenya serve as a platform for constructing and representing Kenyan identities. By building narratives through dialogue and imagery, Kenyan music videos carry many similarities with societal nuances of other countries' cultures and values. For example, apart from the entertainment and marketing value of music, many musical genres have become an instrument for challenging hegemonic order and societal stereotypes such as poor political leadership, corruption, gender discrimination, and patriarchal ideology. Music has therefore offered an important platform for international acceptance of ideals and values that Kenya represents.⁹²

Similarly, Kenya's vast cultural industry in the media has presented it with significant opportunities of appropriating its soft power. The perception of the international community about Kenya through media influence has improved. Just like BBC of the United Kingdom, CNN of the United States, CCTV news of China, and Russia Today of Russia, several Kenyan media stations have projected the country's image both within the East African region and across the world in general, and have therefore been able to condition the international perception of Kenya. The country's diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural background has offered it an extra advantage in terms of cultural attraction and formula for other countries to emulate. Kenya is one of the multicultural countries in the world and its practice of an all-inclusive democracy makes it less challenging for

⁹¹ Akong'a, J. (2016). "Culture in Development" in Idha, S. A. (Ed) *Kenya: An Official Handbook*. Nairobi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

⁹² Hofstede, G., (2017), *Culture's Consequence: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

other countries to identify with the ethnic and political challenges that the country faces. Kenya's cultural heritage, particularly cultural nuances with Swahili language visibly permeates many parts of the country. For instance, the concept of '*Harambee*' is characterised by universal values such as sharing, caring, respect, compassion, humanness, warmth, empathy, commitment, care, sympathy, sensitivity and care to the needs of others.⁹³ According to Nye soft power theory, this is an important source of Kenya's culture as a soft power and has more than likely attracted people and produced soft power in certain situations where culture was somewhat similar rather than dissimilar.⁹⁴

3.2 Culture as a Soft Power tool for Kenya's Nation Branding

Culture is considered to be at the heart of Kenya's soft power tools. The country's aspirations of a great economic power status have driven it to embrace culture as an important element of its soft power as a strategy for promoting its national interests. This is because the country's image and the idea about itself is best communicated through its culture. A study respondent noted that "The Maasai culture is one of the brands Kenya uses to promote its image abroad and attract tourists".⁹⁵ Throughout Kenya's history, a strong cultural dimension has always existed and has been symbolised by its literature, music, diverse religions and national values. The country's rich and varied culture offers it ample resources by which it can engage with the international community so as to promote its interests. No doubt exists as to whether Kenya employs culture as a tool to project its soft power. Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs believes that culture is a key diplomatic

⁹³ Chieni, S. N. (2001). *The Harambee Movement in Kenya: The Role Played by Kenyans and the Government in the Provision of Education and Other Social Services*. (Presentation, Seventh BOLESWA Symposium, University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni, Swaziland).

⁹⁴Nye, J. (2004). *Soft Power: The means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

⁹⁵ Study Respondent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 24th June 2021.

tool and the best form of soft power in today's multicultural world. Many Kenyan leaders believe that the country's rise should not only be based on its political and economic power but also on its cultural soft power.⁹⁶

Akong'a charges that an examination of culture in Kenya is not a recent enterprise but one with a long history dating back to the precolonial times.⁹⁷ The exercise of culture as a soft power for promoting national interests by various administrative governments since independence is well documented. The most prominent elements in this exercise have been development partnership programmes with countries such as the United Kingdom, Japan, China, United States, France, India and several other countries across the globe.

Marat posits that in the 21st century, competition among countries for tourists, markets, resources, and investments has increasingly become more intense.⁹⁸ Countries that have marketed themselves as attractive destinations for investments and tourism by differentiating themselves from others have stood a good chance of succeeding. A number of countries have in recent times resorted to national branding strategies as an important tool for growth and development. Countries have sought to portray themselves as attractive destinations for investment and tourism, promoting their soft power and managing how the world sees them. Culture has had an important role to play in this process.

Anholt contends that many countries around the world are not content with the image and reputation that foreign nations have of them.⁹⁹ Countries either suffer from a bad image or the

⁹⁶ The Government of Kenya (2014). *Kenya's Foreign Policy Document*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya.

⁹⁷ Akong'a, J. (2016). "Culture in Development" in Idha, S. A. (Ed) *Kenya: An Official Handbook*. Nairobi: Ministry of Information Communication and Technology.

⁹⁸ Marat, E. (2009). *Nation Branding: A New Campaign to Present Ideas about the State and the Nation*. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61(7), 1123-1136.

⁹⁹ Anholt, S. (2005). *Brand New Justice: How Branding Places and Products can help the Developing World*, Revised Edition. Oxford: Elsevier.

image other countries have of them are outdated and not in touch with the present reality. The latter is most likely to be the case with countries that have experienced rapid social and economic changes in recent times. Kenya has been among the countries that have suffered from this second problem. Through culture, Kenya has been attempting to present an image of a country that is a favourable destination for tourism and investment, thereby dissuading negative perceptions of an under-performing economy. One of the study respondents noted that “the use of culture as a soft power strategy for promoting national interests has been an attempt by Kenya to change international audiences’ perceptions by not just communicating with them but also engaging with them. The most effective way Kenya has been shaping the perceptions of foreign audiences has been communicating its recent achievements”.¹⁰⁰

The highlighting of the country’s richness, uniqueness, and the diversity of its culture and heritage has certainly been helpful in developing a better understanding of the country to foreign audiences. Cultural exchanges, music, sports, films, festivals and tourism are all platforms that Kenya uses to project her image. Kenya has also learnt how to use culture to ease concerns it may attract with foreign audience and gain international appeal. The domestic institutions of culture in the country that underpins and offer expression to its cultural policy are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology and Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage. Of the above institutions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been mandated by the Constitution of Kenya to pursue the country’s foreign policy. The foreign policy is grounded and interlinked on five pillars of diplomacy which provide a framework for implementing the country’s cultural diplomacy. The five pillars are peace, economic, environment, diaspora, and culture. Kenya’s cultural diplomacy strives to use culture as an

¹⁰⁰ Study Respondent, Ministry of Foreign affairs. 12th June 2021.

important soft power tool in its foreign relations especially through the use of endowments and cultural heritage as a pedestal for international engagement.¹⁰¹

Kenya has engaged in nation branding initiatives in order to compete effectively in the global market-place. The initiatives have been a part ‘destination-branding’ for attracting foreign investments and foreign tourists and a part ‘nation-branding’ for an image makeover. Initiatives to promote tourism have often highlighted Kenya’s cultural elements and has helped it stand out as a destination with a colourful and unique experience for visitors.¹⁰² This concurs with one of the study respondent who argued that “Culture has been a resource of choice for Kenya to demonstrate its uniqueness. Kenya most significant international promotion campaign has been ‘Magical Kenya’, which was designed to give the country a distinctive identity. Part of its primary design was to also attract international tourists to Kenya by promoting the country as an attractive destination. The campaign which was conceived and launched by Kenya’s Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife has involved highlighting Kenya’s natural and historic sites including game reserves, museums, beaches, mountains, mausoleums and wildlife sanctuaries”.¹⁰³ The campaign has proven very successful in boosting annual tourist arrival to the country. Additionally, Kenya as a signatory to the 1972 Convention on Protection of Cultural and World Heritage has six sites of value inscribed on the World Heritage list. The sites are Mount Kenya National Park, Lamu Old Town, Lake Turkana National Park, Fort Jesus, Kenya Lake Systems in the Great Rift Valley, and the Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests.¹⁰⁴ According to the Oxford Business Group, Kenyan leaders and foreign policy practitioners appear to understand the value of culture as a component of soft

¹⁰¹ The Government of Kenya (2014). *Kenya’s Foreign Policy Document*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya.

¹⁰² Bloomberg Terminal Research. (2017). *THE REPORT Kenya*. Oxford Business Group.

¹⁰³ Study respondent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya. 27th July 2021.

¹⁰⁴ The World Bank. (2010). *Kenya’s Tourism: Polishing the Jewel*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

power.¹⁰⁵ A better understanding of how the international community's perception of the country shapes its behaviour towards it also exists. Kenya has engaged its national culture as a soft power strategy to facilitate its rise a growing economy as well as brand and market itself as an attractive destination for business visitors, foreign tourists and students.

In order to also enhance its image and national brand, Kenya has also been supportive of the United Nations and the African Union in the areas of peace keeping and conflict resolution. The country has been a peace builder both in the African continent and the rest of the world. It has participated in peacekeeping in Namibia, Congo, Croatia, Liberia, Lebanon, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Mozambique and Mali.¹⁰⁶ Regionally, contributions made by Kenya to peace operations dates back to 1979, however, in terms of supporting UN operations, Kenya made its first contribution of military observers to the UN from 1988-1990 to the Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG). Kenya has since deployed a contingent of troops to among other, the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Croatia, the UN Transition Assistant Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, UN missions in Liberia (UNOMIL), the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the UN –African Union Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Kenya's cooperation in peacekeeping missions enhances its cultural image and has used it as a soft power for acquiring development aid and different types of support from other bilateral donors.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Oxford Business Group (2016). *The Report: Kenya 2016 Economic Snapshot- Kenya Diversifies Amidst Setbacks*. Oxford Business Group (OBG).

¹⁰⁶ Liu, F. (1998). *The History of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Following the Cold War*. (UNITARPOCI) P.69

¹⁰⁷ Cilliers, J. (2008). *The African Standby Force: An Update on Progress*, ISS Paper No. 160. Institute for Security Studies, p. 17.

3.3 Kenya as a Hub for various Intercultural Events and Exchange Programmes

Bankole posits that Kenya continues to invest heavily in the training and development of human resources in the areas of culture and arts.¹⁰⁸ This is evident especially in its higher education where tertiary institutions offer courses in the areas of music, fine arts, dance, drama, and cultural studies. Subjects are also taught in primary and high school levels, where learners are taught more about their cultural heritages and local traditions. Through the teaching of the subjects in public sector programmes, Kenya has succeeded in sustaining a multi-ethnic society and maintaining cultural harmony thus resulting in a peaceful and stable climate in the country.¹⁰⁹

The government has also worked to foster cultural exchange programmes as they not only boost national image but are also seen as important means of building international networks that can create a foundation for economic cooperation and lasting cultural understanding. Some of the cultural exchange programmes that have taken place include the Academic Exchange with African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD), Lake Turkana Festival, Loiyangalani, Lola Kenya Screen, and Tuelewane Youth Exchange Programme to Enhance Peace (TYEPEP).¹¹⁰

The Academic Exchange with African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) is a regional programme that serves three Eastern Africa countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Funded by the governments of the three countries with support from the government of Japan through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the programme aims at promoting international cooperation in agricultural education, strengthening research capacities in agricultural universities, and promoting development of human capacity in the three countries. The exchange programme

¹⁰⁸ Bankole, G., (2017). *Harnessing Cultural Heritage for Tourism Development in Kenya: Issues and Prospects* 2(3) Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Bankole, G., (2017). *Harnessing Cultural Heritage for Tourism Development in Kenya: Issues and Prospects* 2(3) Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective.

has been an excellent way of how cultural relations can take place in academia. The programme has incorporated knowledge in the agricultural field between Kenyan academics and Japanese academics with the hope that both countries reap mutual benefits from research.¹¹¹

The Lake Turkana Festival is an annual event held annually in Loiyangalani to showcase cultures and lifestyles of communities that live in that area. The programme which is facilitated by the government of Kenya through the National Museums of Kenya uses the cultural festival as a way in which it can foster cultural dialogue amongst ethnic communities that were formerly in conflict with each other. The programme has been one of the ways that illustrate how art can be used as a means of resolving conflict while at the same time enabling cultural understanding. The other aims of the festival have been to promote domestic and international tourism, provide a means for cultural cooperation and exchange, and promote peace and reconciliation among local communities.¹¹²

The Kenyan government recognizes that culture is one of the main methods through which it can deal with ethnic tensions that usually arise from time to time. Besides groups existing in the country which work against social cohesion, the Kenyan government recognises that opportunities exist in the country for the creation of a peaceful society through rapid modernization that originates from globalization, free trade, democracy and respect for human rights. In the face of political tensions and violence that occur along ethnic lines, the Kenyan government recognises that the only way it can foster peaceful coexistence in the country is through the enactment and implementation of multicultural policies that are aimed at inclusion of its citizens. A key objective of these policies has been to provide a means through which the country can forge a vibrant

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

national identity that instils national pride. The government also appreciates that culture and cultural diversity are central in furthering a sustainable socio-economic development. Such elements create conditions that are necessary for spiritual and intellectual existence, besides increasing opportunities for economic activity.¹¹³

As part of its effort to boost its national image Kenya has also been a party to a number of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) agreements that have a focus on culture.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, the country has committed to several pertinent initiatives with UNESCO. These include protection and conservation of cultural heritage as outlined by the 1972 UNESCO convention on the protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention). The Kenyan government, through the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage has also had a significant role in the implementation of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions which was a precursor to seven UNESCO conventions covering the areas of cultural and natural heritage, creative diversity, movable cultural property and contemporary creativity. The convention is a legally binding international treaty that ensures citizens, practitioners, artists, and cultural professionals worldwide can produce, distribute and enjoy a wide range of cultural goods, activities and services.¹¹⁵ The convention which has a strong focus on developing countries has the main objective of strengthening production, access, dissemination and enjoyment of cultural expressions that are transmitted through cultural activities.

¹¹³ Akong'a, J. (2016). "Culture in Development" in Idha, S. A. (Ed) *Kenya: An Official Handbook*. Nairobi: Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology.

¹¹⁴ UNESCO (2016) *World Conference on Tourism Development Access and Equality*. UNESCO

¹¹⁵ UNESCO (2016) *World Conference on Tourism Development Access and Equality*. UNESCO

Ncube & Ondiege posits that advancements made in digital technologies and media tools has made the production, access, dissemination and enjoyment of cultural expressions possible.¹¹⁶ Digital media has thus made the spheres of human activities like culture acquire new characteristics. For Kenya, digital media has not only offered new tools for practising culture, but it has also accentuated and accelerated cultural changes. In terms of national projection, digital media has significantly increased the scope and diversity of international audiences as well as providing new platforms for showcasing culture.¹¹⁷ Digital technologies have expanded the soft power outreach of Kenya thus the capability of culture in promoting national interest.

3.4 Kenya's Cultural Soft Power and Political Values

It is argued that Kenya's recent economic and political achievements have presented the world and specifically Africa with a political recipe for success. When perceived in the context of Nye's soft power theory and attributes of political values, Kenya's soft power is entrenched in a number of factors including its political goodwill, electoral democratic ideals, respect for constitutionalism, domestic policies, respect for human rights, international status of its political leaders, and constitutionally enshrined values. Kenya has thus utilised a combination of its soft power resources to increase its influence in the international arena. The country's status as an electoral democracy where the rights of all individuals are observed has afforded it a legitimate moral basis in the comity of states. Values enshrined in the constitution prescribe certain universal political ideals that are upheld generally by civilised nations.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Ncube, M. & Ondiege, P. (2014) *Silicon Kenya Harnessing ICT Innovations for Economic Development*. African Development Bank Group.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ The Government of Kenya (2014). *Kenya's Foreign Policy Document*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya.

The Kenyan constitution is remarkable for its respect of human rights, upholding of equality, and sacrosanct political values. The political actions and inactions of the country are guided by the constitution which is the supreme law of the land. With the guidance of the constitution, Kenya has been able to champion for the core principles of fundamental human rights, equality, justice, and fairness on an international scale. The country has therefore secured international collaboration on the grounds of having the same ideals and norms that are strongly and inherently respected within its political structures and systems.¹¹⁹

According to Bloomberg Terminal Research, Kenya is a country that upholds certain liberal political values and has scored significantly in the international community in terms of degree of acceptance.¹²⁰ Adding to this is the increasing number of women participations in politics, which has been a major highlight of Kenya's political system. Women's involvement in Kenya's politics has continued to increase drastically since the year 2002. Kenya has also gained a huge advantage politically by being considered as one of the few countries in Africa that has prioritised the rights of minority like women, children, and the physically challenged. The constitution of Kenya guarantees the rights of these minority groups.

According to Ewelukwa, Kenya has utilised its relations with East African states to put matters such as free and fair trade on the regional agenda and call for regional cooperation using its soft power.¹²¹ In its diplomatic practice, Kenya continues to emphasise universally accepted norms governing international relations including mutually beneficial economic agreements and the use of negotiations to peacefully settle disputes. The country was instrumental in helping revive the

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Bloomberg Terminal Research. (2017). *THE REPORT Kenya*. Oxford Business Group.

¹²¹ Ewelukwa, U., (2017). *East-South Trade and Investment: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly- African Perspectives*. Minnesota Journal of International Law, 20.

East African Community (EAC) as a regional economic bloc. EAC currently constitutes an important part of the African Economic Community, a body of the African Union states that provides grounds for mutual economic cooperation.¹²² Kenya has also been promoting an East-South economic cooperation through the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), thus reinforcing its cultural credentials.¹²³ Halleart contends that Kenya performs above average on how it presents a foreign policy that is in conformity to international norms and standards.¹²⁴ The country's increased participation in regional multilateral institutions such as the East African Community (EAC), African Union (AU) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), reflects that it is a responsible and cooperative actor in the international system.¹²⁵

3.5 Sports as a Cultural Soft Power

According to van der Westhuizen, sports as a global cultural phenomenon and its transformation from a leisure activity into a billion-dollar industry has enabled the creation of a soft power space for countries willing to harness it.¹²⁶ The scholar adds that besides nations going to war, sports events are the most popular and eminent means by which national identities have been enacted. Achievements in sports are subtle tools that demonstrate developmental strides a country is making. Developed states like the United States and China have utilised sports as a diplomatic tool of asserting their influence in the international system during major sporting events across the

¹²² EAC Secretariat (2018). *East African Community Facts and Figures*. Arusha: EAC.

¹²³ Ibid 15.

¹²⁴ Halleart, J., (2016). *Can Regional Integration Accelerate Development in Africa? GCE Model Simulations of the Impact of the SADC and EAC*. IMF Working Papers, 1-30.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Van der Westhuizen, J., (2008). *Popular Culture, Discourse and Divergent Identities: Reconstructing the African Continent*, African Identities, 6.1, pp. 45-61.

world. As a popular culture, sports have had the capacity to establish the means by which countries' identities are exhibited and have become veritable political tools especially when they generate collective expectations of patriotism, popularity, and national unity. State leaders have therefore been able to utilise the platform presented by major sporting events to popularise their official positions in global politics by putting forward claims of the overall strategic value the sporting events mean for their people.¹²⁷

For Kenya, sports have been a major cultural tool it has used as a soft power to promote its national interests. The country has strategically harnessed the achievement of many of its sports athletes to actualise specific gains in its national interests and foreign policy priorities. Kenyan athletes have been celebrated all over the world as they have won several international athletics competitions. Since 1979 when Kenya successfully hosted the first international sporting event, a football competition constituted by member nations of the Council for East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA), the country continues to take advantage of these international events to attract and gain international acceptance and prestige. The country has utilised sports as a political instrument to accomplish certain external strategies and is therefore a regular feature in its diplomatic engagement. Kenya has used sports in many ways as a leverage to express its commitments in the African continent. For example, in order to promote New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and African Renaissance agenda, Kenya hosted the 2003 Cricket World Cup alongside South Africa and Zimbabwe.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Allison, L & Monnington, T. (2008). Sport, Prestige and International Relations, Government and Opposition, Vol. 37, Issue 1, pp. 106-134.

¹²⁸ Njororai, W. (2003). *The Diversity of Sport in Kenya*. Africa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Sport and Dance.

Kenya has also found sports to be an effective and less costly way of projecting its image abroad. No other sporting activity has positively projected Kenya's image abroad than athletics. The hoisting of Kenya's national flag by winning athletes at international sporting events has been one of the ways utilised by the country to attract the world to the Kenyan brand. The country's Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage is charged with the mandate of among other things the mission of promoting Kenya's sports and culture, protecting the country's national cultural heritage, and establishing relations with cultural institutions both within the country and abroad.¹²⁹ Mahlman et al. posits that no doubt exists as to whether sports has contributed in projecting Kenya's culture abroad thus promoting its national interests.¹³⁰ The fact that sports is among the biggest socio-economic sectors in Kenya is not a subject of debate. The scholar observes that sports have an indelible mark as an instrument of socialization and a reflection people's culture. The Kenyan people recognize sports as a symbol of national unity and since the country has 42 ethnic groups and others of diverse religious and racial background, sports has been a medium of coexistence for the people. Every time local sportsmen and women have competed against foreign ones, Kenyans, regardless of racial, religious or ethnic differences have always come out together and shown support for their teams. Such solidarity has been a good gesture as it has enabled people to work harmoniously on common goals. It has also brought about understanding among people of diverse backgrounds and appreciation for one another.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Government of Kenya (2009). *The Draft National Sports Policy*. Department of Sports.

¹³⁰ Mahlman, P., Asembo, J. M. and Korir, M., (2008). *An Analysis of Sports in Kenya*. Journal of Eastern African Research and Development 23, 160-175.

¹³¹ Mahlman, P., Asembo, J. M. and Korir, M., (2008). *An Analysis of Sports in Kenya*. Journal of Eastern African Research and Development 23, 160-175.

A study respondent stated that “Kenyan teams have often played leading roles in attracting popularity and publicity to the country during international sports events. This aspect of sports as an instrument of attracting national popularity is an aspect of the cultural influence of sports which can be perceived as a soft power.”¹³² The numerous successes recorded by Kenyan sportsmen and women ever since Kenya participated for the first time in Olympic Games in 1956 has earned the country a lot of recognition in the international scene. Mazrui posits that sports has effectively over the years presented an avenue through which the people of Kenya can preserve and express their cultural heritage.¹³³ The scholar observes that in Africa, sports have always been linked to indigenous culture. For instance, traditional initiation to manhood was undifferentiated from a warrior status, which was also directly associated to masculinity and the prowess that modern sports possess. Modern sporting like wrestling, track running, swimming, dancing and horse racing are considered an extension of indigenous sports which found its expression in different forms such as drumming, mock fights, singing, hunting, animal back riding and swimming activities in streams and rivers.¹³⁴ Modern sport has therefore come to be closely associated with traditional beliefs and practices that indigenous people had. Traditional beliefs and practices such as songs, traditional dances, warrior like activities, and superstitious acts all characterize African traditional culture and have in some way found expression in Kenya’s sports events. The relationship between culture and sports has therefore been an enduring phenomenon that Kenya has used as a soft power to pursue its interests.

¹³² Study respondent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya. 15th July 2021.

¹³³ Mazrui, A., (1986). *The Africans: Triple Heritage* BBC Publications, London.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

3.6 Challenges of Facing Kenya in using Culture as a Soft power

Mangaliso & Mbigi aver that Kenya is a country blessed with culture as a soft power resource but lacks institutional capacity to harness it and effectively promote its national interests.¹³⁵ The country's image is also undermined by certain negative perceptions that have become entrenched in the minds of foreigners. Factors such as widespread poverty, terrorism, police brutality, political corruption, poor governance, and allegations of human rights violations by security forces have undermined Kenya's soft power capability and its ability to use culture as a national attraction.¹³⁶

Additionally, the allocation of resources by the government to Kenya's cultural initiatives is quite meagre compared to its aspirations. Inadequate funding affects the country's cultural engagements thus how it can promote its national interests. Further, the reluctance of foreign policy experts and officials to engage with international audiences and communicate clearly on Kenya's positions and views on major cultural issues is another barrier to the application of culture as soft power to promote national interests.¹³⁷

Akong'a also charges that culture and art in Kenya are undervalued and underappreciated soft power resources for promoting national interests.¹³⁸ According to the scholar, the Kenyan government interest in projecting culture to foreign audiences has fluctuated over the years. Policies have persistently been changed and so there is a lack of invested approach in projecting culture as a soft power for promoting national interests.

¹³⁵ Mangaliso, M., & Mbigi, L., (2012), *National Culture, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development: Different Patterns across the African Union*. Small Business Economics, Vol. 42 No. 4, pp. 685 -701.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid 40.

¹³⁸ Akong'a, J. (2016). "Culture in Development" in Idha, S. A. (Ed) *Kenya: An Official Handbook*. Nairobi: Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology.

3.7 Conclusion

Culture as a soft power is a significant tool that has helped Kenya advance its national interest. The country's aspirations of a great economic power status have driven it to embrace culture as an important element of its soft power as a strategy for promoting its national interests. This is because the country's image and the idea about itself is best communicated through its culture. Kenya has significant cultural resources in the form of media, art, music, and literature that it has tried to harness in transforming its diplomatic engagement with the international community. Similarly, Kenya's vast cultural industry has presented it with significant opportunities of appropriating its soft power. With the help of media stations, the country's image has been projected both within the East African region and across the world in general, which has subsequently facilitated the conditioning of the international perception of Kenya. The country's diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural background has offered it an extra advantage in terms of cultural attraction and formula for other countries to emulate. Some of the challenges Kenya faces in using culture as a soft power resource is the lack of institutional capacity to harness it and effectively promote its national interests, meagre resource allocation to cultural initiatives as compared to the country's aspirations, and under-valuing and under-appreciation of culture as a soft power resource for promoting national interests. The next chapter will explore how effective culture is as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CULTURE AS A SOFT-POWER STRATEGY IN PROMOTING KENYA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter investigated how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests; the present chapter seeks to assess the effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest. Culture can be used as one of the methods a state can use to achieve its national interests. Culture is an effective projector of a country's international relations and gives a state the identity through which most people see it. Cooperation between two states is dictated by their common interests in culture, games, among others.¹³⁹ Cultural diplomacy is a form of soft power that involves trading thoughts and craftsmanship between countries for a common understanding. Kenya's foreign policy is built on the country's peace, prosperity and global competition. It is based on the national qualities and the citizen's desires as established in the constitution.¹⁴⁰ Cultural diplomacy is a constituent pillar of Kenya's foreign policy and dwells on the potential of the country's cultural heritage towards the country's development. Cultural diplomacy aims at advancing open consciousness of Kenya's foreign policy to promote its national interests in the global arena. The adoption of cultural diplomacy in Kenya's foreign policy aims to ensure that culture plays a key role in the socio-economic advancement of the nation. Various forms of culture such as the Kiswahili dialect, sports, and music and dance have been used to forge friendships and mutual understanding locally, regionally and internationally. This chapter will determine how culture as a soft power can promote Kenya's national interests.

¹³⁹ Rana K. S., *Inside Diplomacy* 2nd Ed. New Delhi: Man as Publication, (2006), p. 19.

¹⁴⁰ Kenya, *Foreign Policy*, November, 2014.

This section of the study analyses interprets and presents the findings of the study with strong focus on the objectives of the study. It involves the primary analysis, following a response of 354 respondents as the population of the study. The primary data is analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), interpreted and presented in form of bar graphs, tables, and pie charts. Finally, secondary data is obtained to elaborate on the results obtained in the primary data. The overall analysis of this section presented the outcome on the importance of culture as a soft-power strategy in enhancing Kenya's national interests.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics refers to the statistical characteristics of a population in a study. They are important in that they provide a wider understanding of diversified characteristics of a population¹⁴¹. More so, the information is useful to an organization involved in the study in making appropriate decisions about the population. In the study, the demographic characteristics were age, sex, the level of education and the organization.

4.1.1 Sex

Sex of the respondents is the standard demographic information that is important in describing a population in research. It helps in the provision of targeted intervention, especially if it is found that it contributes to the providing study results or outcome. In the study, the respondents were either male or female respondents as shown in Table 4.1 below;

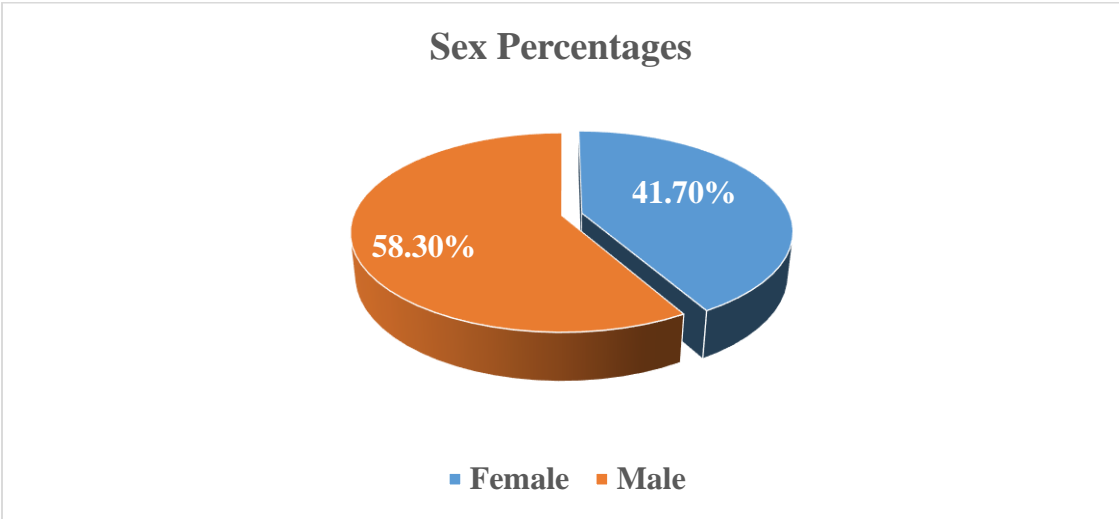
¹⁴¹ Carpar, E., McCarthy, G., Adamis, D., Donmezler, G., Cesur, E., & Fistikci, N. (2018). Socio-demographic characteristics and factors associated with hospitalization in psychiatry of old age patients: an international comparison between Ireland and Turkey. *Aging clinical and experimental research*, 30(6), 651-660.

Table 4.1: Sex Distribution of the Respondents

		Sex			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	134	41.7	41.7	41.7
	Male	220	58.3	58.3	100.0
	Total	354	100.0	100.0	

Out of the 354 respondents, 134 were female and 220 were male. This implies that a large percentage of the respondents were male at 58.3% and female at 41.7%. The table is further presented into a pie chart as shown in Figure 4.1 below;

Figure 4.1: Sex of the Respondents



In this study, sex played an important role in decision making, communication, stakeholder engagement and prioritization of interventions. Sex roles, identities, relationships and institutionalized sex influence how implementation strategies work, for whom, under what

circumstances and why, especially in determining the role of culture in advancing Kenya's National interests¹⁴².

4.1.2 Age

The study considered the age of the respondents as the primary demographic data. According to Sorbi, age is important attribute, especially in the analysis of the target audience.¹⁴³ Since the study is about culture, respondents who appear to have grown together are referred to as cultural generations. In this case, these individuals share many of the similar experience subject to contributing main points required in the study. The study involved various categories of age, ranging from 20 to 60 years as shown in following respondents' frequency distribution table. Asking gender questions enables the researcher to ensure that the sample size is representative. Therefore, the proportion of gender in a study plays an important role in decision making, stakeholder involvement, communication and preferences for conducting interventions.¹⁴⁴

Table 4.2: Age Distribution of the Respondents

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30	135	66.7	66.7	66.7
	31-40	121	16.7	16.7	83.3
	41-50	63	8.3	8.3	91.7
	51-60	35	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	354	100.0	100.0	

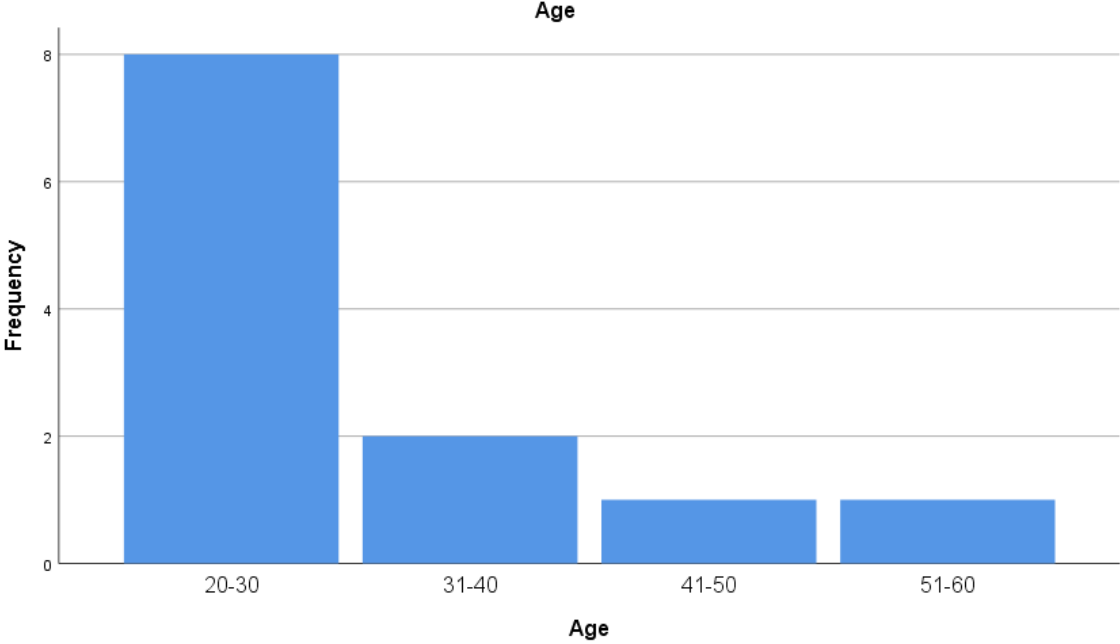
¹⁴² Ibid

¹⁴³ Sorbi, M. H., Issazadegan, A., Soleimani, E., & Mirhosseini, H. (2020). Relationship between Demographic Characteristics, Depression and Insomnia with Restless Legs Syndrome: A Case-Control Study of Adults Aged 17-70 Years in Yazd. *Journal of Community Health Research*, 9(2), 81-89.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

From the table majority of the respondents are between the age of 20-30 which is equivalent to 66.7%, followed by 31-40 (16.7%), and lastly 41-50 and 51-60 each at 8.3%. Figure 4.2 below shows the bar graph of the age distribution of the respondents.

Figure 4.2: Age of the Respondents



4.1.3 Level of Education

This represents the highest-level attainable level of education of the respondents in the study. Education is important since it improves knowledge, social and economic status of the respondents throughout their life. In addition, it enhances the confidence of the respondents, and enhances personal and career growth. In the study, the level of education was university education as shown in Table 4.3 below;

Table 4.3: Level of Education of the Respondents

		Level of Education			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	University education	354	100.0	100.0	100.0

From the table 100% of the respondents possess university education as their level of education.

4.1.4 Organization

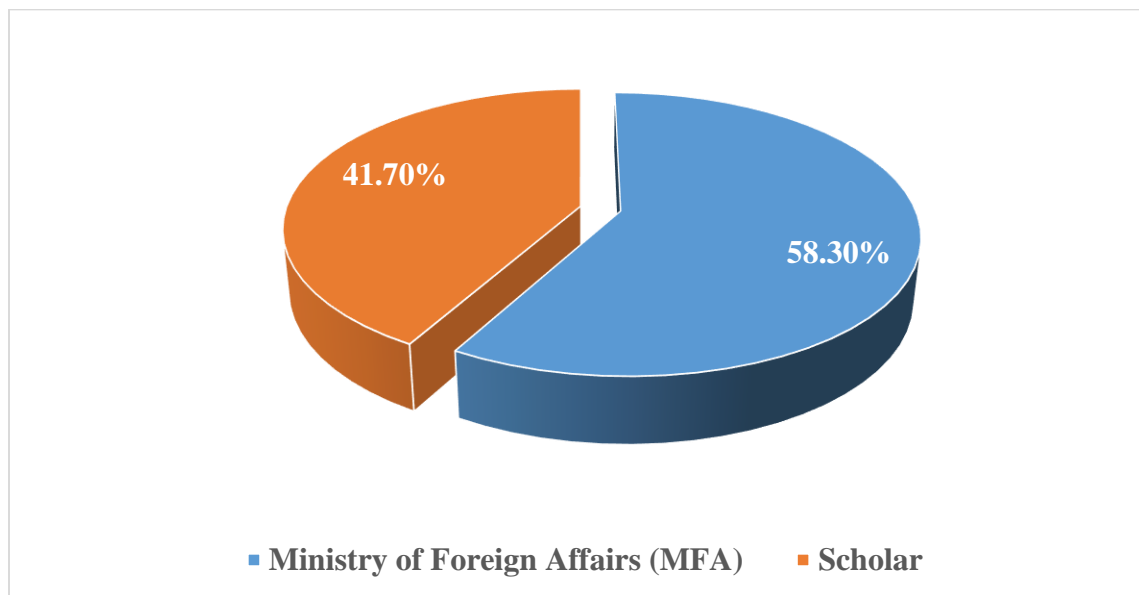
Organization generally refers to the occupation of the respondents. In the study the organization of the respondents was either being a scholar or Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as presented in the following table;

Table 4.4: Organization of the Respondents

		Organization			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	307	58.3	58.3	41.7
	Scholar	47	41.7	41.7	100.0
	Total	354	100.0	100.0	

From the table, 307 out of 354 respondents were from MFA, while 47 out of 354 were scholars. This implies that those from MFA were 41.7% and the scholars were 58.3%. In other words, scholars were more than the MFA respondents as shown in the following pie chart.

Figure 4.3: Organization of the Respondents



4.2 Role of Culture in Advancing Kenya’s National Interests

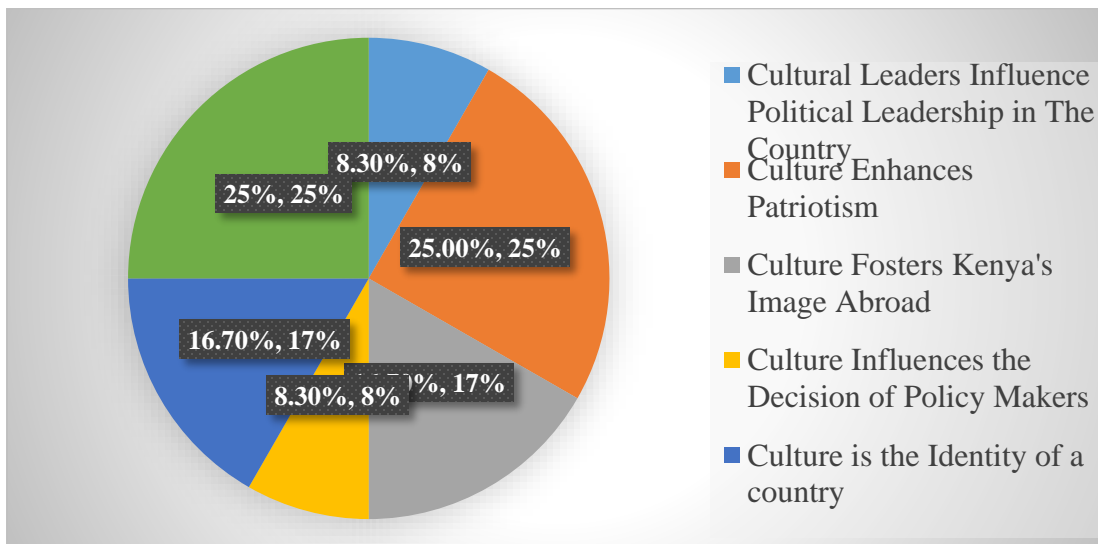
Culture refers to the attributes and knowledge of a certain group of people, surrounding language, religion, social habits, music and arts. Culture is important in that it provides social and economic benefits. In addition, it builds a sense of local identity and commonality, while advancing individual and organizational interests. When asked about whether culture plays a key role in advancing Kenya’s national interests, all the 354 respondents responded “Yes” with each of them giving reasons as shown in the Table 4.5 below;

Table 4.5: Role of Culture in Advancing Kenya’s National Interests

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cultural Leaders Influence Political Leadership in The Country	5	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Culture Enhances Patriotism	102	25.0	25.0	33.3
	Culture Fosters Kenya's Image Abroad	4	16.7	16.7	50.0
	Culture Influences the Decision of Policy Makers	4	8.3	8.3	58.3
	Culture is the Identity of a country	94	16.7	16.7	75.0
	Culture Promotes Tourism	145	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	354	100.0	100.0	

From the table the distribution in terms of percentage is given in the following pie chart;

Figure 4.4 Distribution of Culture Roles in terms of percentage



4.2.1 Culture Enhances Patriotism

Patriotism refers to the feeling of love, dedication and sense of attachment to a country and association with other citizens, sharing similar sentiments to create unity. Culture enhances

patriotism that is important in validating the individual and country interests. According to the respondent, culture enhances patriotism in advancing Kenya's national interests by uniting people of diversified ethnic groups in a single and culturally patriotic society.

4.2.2 Cultural Leaders Influence Political Leadership in the Country

According to Gorodnichenko, cultural standards are absorbed by an organization, individual or a country, leading to bad or good effects.¹⁴⁵ One of the respondents points out on this role, explaining that “cultural leaders affect political leadership of the country given their responsibility in creating systems that are important in the development of the organizational culture of the country, while reinforcing the country's values”.¹⁴⁶

4.2.3 Culture Influences the Decision of Policy Makers

A respondent pointed out that culture influences policy makers decision-making based on their norms and their cultural norms. Culture affects policy makers' decision-making process as well as perspectives of problem-solving through social and workplace values¹⁴⁷. For instance, women do not supervisory roles, leading to their exclusions from a discussion that is aimed at providing a solution to a problem.

¹⁴⁵ Gorodnichenko, Y., & Roland, G. (2021). Culture, institutions and democratization. *Public choice*, 187(1), 165-195.

¹⁴⁶ Study respondent, Ministry of Foreign affairs. 3rd June 2021.

¹⁴⁷ Bitsani, E. (2004). *Cultural Management and Regional Development, Planning Cultural Policy and Cultural Product*. Dionikos: Athens, Greece.

4.2.4 Culture is the Identity of a country

Culture is a defining characteristic of a country's identity, contributing to how it sees itself and the group it identifies. A country's understanding of her own and other identities is shaped by the cultural norms and attitudes prevalent in the surrounding countries¹⁴⁸. Therefore, culture is an important contributor in advancing the Kenya's national interests as it enhances a sense of belonging and national security.

4.2.5 Culture Promotes Tourism

Culture establishes a genuineness and uniqueness in international tourism market.¹⁴⁹ From the respondent's point of view, culture is an essential element of the tourism product that creates a fostering relationship, enhancing attractiveness and competitiveness in the tourism destinations.¹⁵⁰

4.2.6 Culture Fosters Kenya's Image Abroad

Culture is important in advancing the Kenya's national interests as displays the image of Kenya globally. In this case, it advances national interests through tourism perspective¹⁵¹. For example, the use of Kenyan Swahili language and foods, Maasai culture, the music fosters the image of the country globally. In addition, culture explains to the world what Kenya holds in as a country and practice. Therefore, through Kenyan culture, the entire world is educated on the basis of values and social life of the Kenyans.

¹⁴⁸ Gutiérrez, N. (2017). The study of national identity. In *Modern Roots* (pp. 3-17). Routledge.

¹⁴⁹ Bankole, G., (2017). *Harnessing Cultural Heritage for Tourism Development in Kenya: Issues and Prospects* 2(3) Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective.

¹⁵⁰ Anholt, S. (2007). *Competitive Identity. The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.

In conclusion, Kenya's culture is a soft power tool in advancing the national interests. Culture naturally speaks by setting the discussion trends on the factors affecting the interests of Kenya. According to the respondents' general comments, the Kenya's national interests are well articulated through culture.

One of the study respondents stated that "Cultural diplomacy as a soft power strategy reveals the soul of a nation which incredibly impacts the nation's universal relations. Cultural diplomacy is an essential piece of soft power and must work hand in hand with social capital".¹⁵² The association between cultural diplomacy and social capital is extremely significant and cannot be disregarded.¹⁵³ Effective social capital enhances cultural diplomacy, whereas poor social capital undermines cultural diplomacy and adversely affects a country's picture in the international arena.

Today film, music and media constitute Africa's key social ambassadors. Together with Africa's trade policy, they constitute the cultural domain. The ability of culture to cultivate an understanding among individuals plays a key role in instructive trade and cultural diplomacy. In politics, culture is incorporated within the state's foreign policy to declare a national intrigue that boosts national image and personality. Cultural diplomacy advances a nation's culture and boosts national trustworthiness through cultural exchange.

The components of soft power are essential in nation branding.¹⁵⁴ Various soft power sources such as culture, art, sports, and others have helped Kenya establish a successful correspondence and association with the general public and the international community. The influence of these connections is that Kenya's image has been enhanced and new relations and enterprises

¹⁵² Study respondent ,Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya. 26th June 2021.

¹⁵³ Dupuis, Xabier; Culture et développement. De la reconnaissance à l'évaluation, UNESCO, Paris, (1991).

¹⁵⁴ Stefano, B et, al., (2009) Online press and media for diplomatic activities. Work shop: Diplo Foundation

established. In international relations, an effective and legit national picture is the most important impression of a nation.

Through cultural diplomacy, states trade thoughts, ideas, data, expressions, and cultures to create an understanding among nationals and foreign nations. The diverse culture of Kenya presents an opportunity to utilize cultural diplomacy in its global interaction to lobby for the world to support its socio-cultural and economic development agenda.

4.3 Kenya’s Use of Culture as A Strategy in Promoting Peace and Security in The Region

The following table shows the reasons why culture has been used by Kenya as a strategy of promoting peace and the security as respondent by 325 out of 354 respondents.

Table 4.6: Kenya’s Use of Culture as a Strategy of Promoting Peace and Security in the Region

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	29	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Yes	325	91.7	91.7	100.0
	Total	354	100.0	100.0	

A culture of peace refers to an integral technique that is set to prevent violence and conflicts in a country. Kenya is a good example of a country that uses culture to promote peace and security. In this case, culture is enhanced through education, advocacy and media, including the use of ICTs and social networks. In addition, peace and security is promoted through the development of cultural and modern tools that enhance dialogue. In the study, the respondents agreed that Kenya uses culture as a strategy in promoting peace and security in the region by supporting it with several reasons. From the study, 2 out of 354 respondents, never provide a reason of using culture strategy,

while 352 out of 354 respondents explained their reasons. The percentage of those who responded is 83.3% while those who never responded is 16.7%.

First, Kenya holds music and art festivities, cooking competitions, use of Swahili language to mitigate tension in the region. This is important in bringing unity among the Kenyans, hence promoting peace and security¹⁵⁵. Secondly, Kenya has always been seen using culture and it will continue using because of its benefits. Tourists are attracted to one's adorable culture that is distinct from other countries which enables the country to gain more revenue through tourism¹⁵⁶. For example, the Maasai community culture has been the biggest attraction to tourist because of their clothing, jewellery, shoes and also their songs and dances.

Kenyan culture is heterogeneous and sharing it can unite different communities. Culture can be shared among different nations and people which promotes harmony. Also, enlightening cultural opinion shapes the importance of peace as a means to influencing the greater population. This is because Kenya can showcase their culture to other states through combined events. There are many occasions when many tourists come to Kenya and tour especially Maasai land. Some have even married from there, dress like them, while they engage in cattle keeping. This is a strong way of coming together as a region. Finally, through export of human capital and resource Kenya can influence the way neighbouring states act especially through a strong work ethic. In this case, culture brings people together and promotes friendly neighbourhood, hence it can be used to champion sustainable peace and security.

¹⁵⁵ Anholt, S. (2007). *Competitive Identity. The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.

¹⁵⁶ Bankole, G., (2017). *Harnessing Cultural Heritage for Tourism Development in Kenya: Issues and Prospects* 2(3) Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective.

4.4 Cultural Diplomacy Play a Role in Nation-Branding

The question on whether cultural diplomacy play a role in nation branding is answered by all the respondents as shown Table 4.7 below;

Table 4.7: Does Cultural Diplomacy Matter in Nation-Branding?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Yes	353	91.7	91.7	100.0
	Total	354	100.0	100.0	

From the table, 1 respondent thought that cultural diplomacy does not play a role in nation-branding while 353 out of 354 agreed on the functionality of cultural diplomacy on nation-branding. From the 353 respondents, 352 explained on the rationale towards their choice. The first second respondent points out that cultural diplomacy is a good platform that exposes the image since Kenya's culture is exported globally and that its initiation affect other countries referring to Kenya's cultural heritage. Cultural diplomacy enhances Kenya's image globally in a broad context.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, the third respondent elaborates on the first role of cultural diplomacy by pointing out that sometimes ago Kenya was branded *Hakuna Matata*, nowadays it is *magical Kenya* and *Tembea Kenya* which portrays Kenyan culture.

¹⁵⁷ Clarke, D. (2014). *Theorizing the role of cultural products in cultural diplomacy from a cultural studies perspective*. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 22, 147-163.

According to the fifth respondent, through cultural diplomacy, Kenya brand herself in the cultural attire, while sharing different cultural values which is great achievement in diplomacy¹⁵⁸. Many tourists visit Kenya to learn about Kenyan cultures which help Kenya brand herself. In addition, the seventh respondent points out that Kenya has diverse cultures and how these relate has a high influence to the great Kenyan brand as all cultures have a part to play in how Kenya is viewed. For example, the Maasai culture is one on the brands Kenya use.¹⁵⁹ Again, when people hold on to a certain way of life, even unity is defined. Finally, culture gives people a unique identity that can be used in nation branding through clothing, song or even a strong work ethics¹⁶⁰. It improves the image of the country by adding value a to Kenya's image abroad.

4.5 The Benefits of Using Soft Power in Pursuit of Kenya's National Interest as Opposed to Hard Power

From the respondents' response on the benefits of using soft power in pursuit of Kenya's national interest as opposed to hard power, 344 out 354 respondents responded. First, there is increased revenue through tourism, and high self-esteem for the nation, being proud of our identity, and patriotism among other benefits.¹⁶¹ The second benefit is that soft power builds more stability and trust because it avoids use of hard power. Through the soft power, there is provision of a win-win situation where there is no coercion enabling cooperation. Also, the ninth respondent points out

¹⁵⁸ Clarke, D. (2014). *Theorizing the role of cultural products in cultural diplomacy from a cultural studies perspective*. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 22, 147-163.

¹⁵⁹ Bankole, G., (2017). *Harnessing Cultural Heritage for Tourism Development in Kenya: Issues and Prospects* 2(3) Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective.

¹⁶⁰ Gautam, S. (2018). Nation brand of Nepal: Building a nation brand of Nepal based on cultural events and festivals.

¹⁶¹ Aluko, O. I. (2020). Chapter Six Soft Power and the State of Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy Opeyemi Idowu Aluko. *Power Politics In Africa: Nigeria And South Africa In Comparative Perspective*, 109.

that it is easy to bring all onboard peacefully and silently. Furthermore, soft power is less expensive because it is what the people are and involves natural occurrence.¹⁶²

As if that is not enough, soft power brings out empathy and inclusivity as it sets to first create a mutual understanding or interest. It is cheaper and achievable as compared to hard power. As a result, the main benefit is building strong relations on shared values, norms and culture which ensures continued diplomatic process.¹⁶³

4.6 The Role of Music as a Cultural Aspect in Promoting National Interests

Music is an integral part of our everyday activity, without which life would be a mistake. According to remarks by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, through music, people come together to transform the world into a peaceful place.¹⁶⁴ Music has the power to go beyond cultural, political, geographic and economic barriers. Kenya's national interests are envisioned in its foreign policy, which serves as the compass for pursuing its national interests in pursuit of economic prosperity. Similarly, Kenya's foreign policy guides its investment agenda and acts as the reference point for international relations.¹⁶⁵ Kenya advances its national interests through its foreign policy build on innovative diplomacy that dwells on peaceful coexistence with other states.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Baldwin, D., (2000). Power and International Relations. In: Carlsnaes, W, Risse, T. and Simmons, B. Thousand Oaks. Handbook of International Relations. California: Sage, pp.177-91.

¹⁶⁴ Annan, Kofi, "Secretary-General underscores the Importance of Music to Humankind". Concert Celebration of the United Nations Day and the Anniversary Membership of Switzerland. United Nations Headquarters, New York City. October 28, 2003.

¹⁶⁵ Kenya's foreign Policy August 2009 Preamble.

Music is a source of intense experiences both individually and communally and unites varied cultures and histories. It is a powerful medium upon which individuals, communities and states can express themselves. Understanding musical traditions through a broader cultural perspective create an awareness and appreciation of the norms that shape a place, its people and politics.

In Kenya, music conventions are a part of the country's cultural heritage and are held in high regard. The government of Kenya understands the significance of music in advancing its national interests and its power to bring individuals together towards national awareness and cooperation in the national affair. As a result, music has been incorporated into the education system to actualize its potential in promoting Kenya's national interests.

Music in cultural diplomacy encourages intercultural correspondence and checks miscommunication among various sections. Thus, intercultural correspondence through music is essential in uniting nations and various individual groups. Kenya can promote its culture and national interests through music and shows that involve Kenyan citizens both in the country and the diaspora and foreign nationals. Through these programs, Kenya advances its trade programs with foreign nations by portraying it as a favorable trade and investment destination.¹⁶⁶ Kenyan music is among the most assorted globally, consisting of music from over forty ethnic groups in the community. Through this rich variety, Kenya advances its cultural diplomacy to promote its national interests in the international landscape.

¹⁶⁶ Saranga D. The use of new media in public diplomacy: One Jerusalem, (2009), p. 78

4.7 Sports as an Aspect of Culture in Advancing National Interest

Sports are among the world's most common relaxation exercises that bring together people from all corners of the world. Sports are a form of cultural diplomacy that can influence social, strategic and political relations. It has the potential to break all forms of barriers and unite people. Thus, the sport has been an integral part among nations endeavouring to fabricate and promote good relations between nations. Nations have leveraged the energy of sports as an avenue to break the socio-cultural boundaries and unite individuals from all walks of life in the festivity of sports action.¹⁶⁷

Sports diplomacy depicts the culture of a nation and signifies its ability to influence social, political and conciliatory relations. It is a global dialect that plays an integral part in molding a country's character, culture and values.¹⁶⁸ Sports built trust among states and unite individuals through its intrinsic values of rivalry, competition and cooperation.

Sports diplomacy is a soft power strategy for flagging foreign policy between enemy states. For instance, the Ping-Pong diplomacy in 1971 is a perfect example of how sports can be soft power diplomacy. A similar case was witnessed between India and Pakistan in 2011, where the cricket world cup match between these two states provided a platform to create peace amid the climate of suspicion and threats between them.

In Kenya, sports have been used to project the state's national agenda. For instance, various forms of sports were used to reconcile and promote peace among different ethnic groups following the 2007 post-election violence. Kenyan athletes have represented the national image globally.

¹⁶⁷ Former United States Ambassador to Denmark, H.E. Jim Cain; at the 2nd Hague Conference in Diplomacy in 2009

¹⁶⁸ Herman, Michael (1998). *Diplomacy and Intelligence: Diplomacy & Statecraft* 9, no. 2 (Jul.): 1-22. [GenPostwar/Policy/90s].

Kenyan athletic champions have placed the country in the global limelight and made it more recognizable through sports.

4.8 Arts and Language

Language and arts form a central part of cultural diplomacy. The arts involve the promotion of traditional crafts, fine arts and heritage.¹⁶⁹ Kenya produces various fashionable products such as *kiondos* which are sold locally and globally. Other elements of Kenyan art include *kangas* with Kenyan proverb imprints in them. These elements of art have established the Kenyan brand internationally.

Similarly, the promotion of the Swahili language forms a central part of cultural diplomacy. The government has undertaken measures to promote it, including setting up teaching centers for the language and supporting the language teachers. The language has been accepted both in the African Union and the United Nations as an official language. Kenya has gained international recognition with various authors winning various awards through the country's rich literature that portrays society's values and aspirations. Film and motion artists are also marketing Kenya globally. Similarly, artistic paintings portraying Kenya's beautiful environment have found their way into the international market, thus marketing Kenya as a favourable tourism and investment destination.

¹⁶⁹ Friedman, Thomas L. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Farrar Strauss Giroux, (1999), pp. 60-62.

4.9 Challenges of Using Culture as A Soft Power Strategy in Pursuit of Kenya's National Interests

According to the respondents' questionnaire, 341 out of 354 respondents provided the challenges of using culture as a soft power strategy in pursuit of Kenya's national interests. The first challenge was pointed that the culture as a soft power strategy leads to globalization which end up having many people who do not embrace culture. Secondly, it enhances an element of tribalism since different cultures see themselves as autonomous entities looking at their own interests and not part of the larger national interest.¹⁷⁰ According to the fifth respondent culture exhibits an indirect way of pursuing national interest, results may take long to be achieved. Also, it may bring a backlash where cultures do not converge and create bad relations.¹⁷¹ Moreover, culture as soft power strategy is not properly understood therefore not properly utilized. Finally, there comes many different cultures where people are trying to ethnicize sport making other tribes hate such sport for no reason. It is sad that culture might not achieve much if other countries in the region are more endowed given its variation that may end up bringing conflict of interest. The overview of these challenges is presented in Table below;

¹⁷⁰ Wu, Y. (2017). Globalization, translation and soft power: A Chinese perspective. *Babel*, 63(4), 463-485.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 147

Table 4.8: Challenges of Using Culture as A Soft Power Strategy in Pursuit of Kenya’s National Interests

What are the challenges of using culture as a soft power strategy in pursuit of Kenya’s national interests?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	25.0	25.0	25.0
Globalization where people does not embrace culture	2	8.3	8.3	33.3
Tribalism	4	8.3	8.3	41.7
Indirect way of pursuing national interest	9	8.3	8.3	50.0
It brings a backlash where cultures do not converge	7	8.3	8.3	58.3
Not properly understood and utilized	25	8.3	8.3	66.7
Many different cultures	48	8.3	8.3	75.0
Many people are trying to ethicize sport	69	8.3	8.3	83.3
Might not achieve much if other countries in the region are more endowed	83	8.3	8.3	91.7
Sometimes cultures vary hence likely to be conflict	95	8.3	8.3	100.0
Total	354	100.0	100.0	

4.10 Recommendations of Improving the Results of Culture as A Strategy Used in Pursuit of Kenya’s Key National Interests

Based on the respondents’ opinions, the study recommended on some of the ways of improving the results of culture as a strategy in pursuit of Kenya’ s national interests. Some of these recommendations are given in the following table as provided by respondents.

Table 4.9: Opinions of Improving the Results of Culture as a Strategy Used to Pursuit Kenya's National Interests

What is your opinion on what should be done to improve the results of culture as a strategy used in pursuit of Kenya's key national interests?

Valid	Recommendations
	1. A strong marketing strategy should be employed to make use of every opportunity to market Kenya at the international stage through sports or export of human capital
	2. Capacity building and more funding
	3. Communicate it to all, let all feel part and package it nicely
	4. Ensuring rigorous awareness creation on the importance of diversity first and how diverse cultures can find common ground and similarities in ensuring national interests are met
	5. Improvement is very essential.
	6. More Awareness should be done. Children should be taught their culture at an early stage
	7. More youth should be encouraged that sports is employment and can be pursued seriously, Government to provide incentives to encourage sportsmen for better results. public sensitization of importance of culture and heritage preservation
	8. Need to identify best culture that can help Kenya's pursue her national, regional and global interests
	9. Organizing more cultural events which brings all cultures together
	10. We should improve on cross-cultural education programmes. Where each culture can learn from the other. This will open different opportunities for learning and economic benefits

4.11 Conclusion

The study has established that Kenya uses various aspects of cultural diplomacy to promote its national agenda. Through sports, Kenya forges new relationships with other foreign nations and projects its image in the global arena. Sports unite people from different walks of life regardless

of their social or cultural differences. Another major aspect of culture is music and dance. Kenyan music is a mix of different values from over forty ethnic groups, and therefore, it represents Kenyan culture locally, regionally and internationally.

Similarly, language and arts represent the Kenyan image abroad. The Swahili language has been recognized internationally, and also Kenyan artifacts have gained global recognition, depicting the nation's image abroad. All these aspects have positively portrayed the Kenyan image internationally, thus helping it effectively advance its national interests. The next chapter will cover study's summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

With key emphasis on assessing the role of culture as a soft power strategy in the promotion of national interests among African states: a case study of Kenya, the study sought to examine how culture is perceived in the international system as soft-power strategy in promoting national interests, investigate how Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests and determine the effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest. This chapter therefore, covers summary of the key findings, presents conclusion and recommendations flowing from the three key objectives that guided the study.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This section covers key findings from each objective of the study.

5.1.1 Culture as a Soft Power Strategy for the Promotion of National Interests

The study has found that Culture is known to shape ideas and serves as an instrument by which occurrences around people can be analyzed. It also offers people ways of seeing, thinking, and interpreting the things around them. The legacy of a state's cultural heritage and history has a significant impact on its external affairs. States inherit culture which in turn influences their interests and the course of action they take to pursue those interests in relation to other states. The approach a nation therefore takes to address its external problems is therefore determined by its belief and traditional values which have developed over the years. In general, nations with a unified culture find it easier to pursue common interests since an overwhelming majority of their citizens

have common perceptions and share similar experiences. Countries with divergent cultures however find it difficult to pursue their interests in collaboration with foreign states.

Culture is critical in shaping public opinion and strengthening a country's reputation as it leads to a better knowledge of other countries' ideals. It also has an influence on the level of acceptance or resistance to change because certain cultural values can hinder or facilitate change. Change is usually first observed in the behavior of people and in the long term when the new behavioral styles have been shared across all groups, they trickle down to deeper levels of cultural values and are represented nationally.

The study concludes that the cultural aspect of a national image is irreplaceable since it shows the intellectual and spiritual qualities of a country's institutions and its people; As a result, certain attempts at measuring and utilizing a country's soft power are made. Culture as a soft power is perceived as a silent weapon that countries can use to gain soft control over other nations through the application of non-violent means to engender mutual understanding and promote relationships. The purpose of promoting culture by countries has therefore always been perceived as a goal of influencing foreign audience. The function of culture as a soft power is to entice foreigners to have a favorable opinion of a country's people, government, and culture. This in turn induces greater cooperation among nations and helps in changing and managing policies and the political environment in the international system.

5.1.2 How Kenya has applied culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests

The study has found that since the country gained independence in 1961, it has utilised culture as a diplomatic tool which has also been a key pillar in its soft power strategy for promoting its

national interests. Kenya has significant cultural resources in the form of media, art, music, and literature that it has tried to harness in transforming its diplomatic engagement with the international community. Its capital Nairobi, has become a hub for the production of films and music videos, some of which portray the country in positive light.

Culture is considered to be at the heart of Kenya's soft power tools. The country's aspirations of a great economic power status have driven it to embrace culture as an important element of its soft power as a strategy for promoting its national interests. This is because the country's image and the idea about itself is best communicated through its culture. Throughout Kenya's history, a strong cultural dimension has always existed and has been symbolized by its literature, music, diverse religions and national values. The country's rich and varied culture offers it ample resources by which it can engage with the international community so as to promote its interests. No doubt exists as to whether Kenya employs culture as a tool to project its soft power. Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs believes that culture is a key diplomatic tool and the best form of soft power in today's multicultural world.

Sports have been a major cultural tool it has used as a soft power to promote its national interests. The country has strategically harnessed the achievement of many of its sports athletes to actualize specific gains in its national interests and foreign policy priorities. Kenyan athletes have been celebrated all over the world as they have won several international athletics competitions. Since 1979 when Kenya successfully hosted the first international sporting event, a football competition constituted by member nations of the Council for East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA), the country continues to take advantage of these international events to attract and gain international acceptance and prestige. The country has utilized sports as a political instrument

to accomplish certain external strategies and is therefore a regular feature in its diplomatic engagement.

5.1.3 The effectiveness of culture as a soft-power strategy in promoting Kenya's national interest

The study has noted that Culture as a soft power is a significant tool that has helped Kenya advances its national interest. The country's aspirations of a great economic power status have driven it to embrace culture as an important element of its soft power as a strategy for promoting its national interests. This is because the country's image and the idea about itself are best communicated through its culture. Kenya has significant cultural resources in the form of media, art, music, and literature that it has tried to harness in transforming its diplomatic engagement with the international community. Similarly, Kenya's vast cultural industry has presented it with significant opportunities of appropriating its soft power.

Sports diplomacy depicts the culture of a nation and signifies its ability to influence social, political and conciliatory relations. It is a global dialect that plays an integral part in molding a country's character, culture and values. Sports built trust among states and unite individuals through its intrinsic values of rivalry, competition and cooperation. Sports diplomacy is a soft power strategy for flagging foreign policy between enemy states. For instance, the Ping-Pong diplomacy in 1971 is a perfect example of how sports can be soft power diplomacy. A similar case was witnessed between India and Pakistan in 2011, where the cricket world cup match between these two states provided a platform to create peace amid the climate of suspicion and threats between them. In Kenya, sports have been used to project the state's national agenda. For instance, various forms of sports were used to reconcile and promote peace among different ethnic groups following the 2007 post-election violence. Kenyan athletes have represented the national image globally. Kenyan

athletic champions have placed the country in the global limelight and made it more recognizable through sports.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that cultural characteristics possessed by any given society are important because such characteristics provide a cultural framework by which national interests can be pursued. National interests can consist of economic interests, political interests, security interests and foreign policy interests. Every country possesses its own national interests rooted on its domestic culture. This confirms the first hypothesis of the study that states that culture is perceived in the international system as soft-power strategy, and that it can promote national interests.

The most important contribution it has to the public diplomacy of a country is the ability it has in showcasing the diversity of opinions, perspectives and views. It plays an essential role in driving public perception and enriching the reputation of a country towards a fuller understanding of other country's values. It has been established that culture affects national interests in two different ways, namely, by constituting national interests and by regulating national interests. When it constitutes national interests, it does so by delineating interests that are worth pursuing and those that are not worth pursuing. When it serves as a regulatory function, it is grounded on norms and principles that a state relies on to decide what can be done or not be done.

The country's aspirations of a great economic power status have driven it to embrace culture as an important element of its soft power as a strategy for promoting its national interests. This is because the country's image and the idea about itself is best communicated through its culture. Kenya has significant cultural resources in the form of media, art, music, and literature that it has tried to harness in transforming its diplomatic engagement with the international community. This respectively confirms the second and third hypothesis that stated that Kenya has applied culture as

a soft-power strategy in promoting its national interests and hypothesis that Kenyan Culture is effective as a soft-power strategy hence it has been used in pursuing of its national interests.

5.3 Recommendations

The study recommends that a strong marketing strategy should be employed to make use of every opportunity to market Kenya at the international stage through sports or export of human capital. Secondly, there is need to improve on cross-cultural education programmes. Where each culture can learn from the other, this will open different opportunities for learning and economic benefits. Finally, Kenya needs to invest heavily in the area of culture in order to facilitate cultural exchange in foreign countries by establishing Kenya cultural institutes in foreign countries such as Chinese Confucius institutes.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

1. There is need to investigate the strategies that government of Kenya should enact to market Kenyan culture globally and use it to enhance its national interests.
2. A research should be conducted to investigate the challenges facing Kenya while using culture as soft power strategy to enhance its national interests.
3. A study should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of Kenya's cultural diplomacy in advancing its national interests.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
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P.O. Box 30197
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Kenya

August 11, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

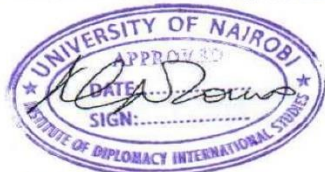
RE: DANCAN NANYANGA BWIRE - R50/34469/2019

This is to confirm that the above-mentioned person is a bona fide student at the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies (IDIS), University of Nairobi pursuing a **Master of Arts Degree in International Studies**. He is working on a research project titled, **“THE ROLE OF CULTURE AS A SOFT POWER STRATEGY IN THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL INTERESTS AMONG AFRICAN STATES: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA”**.

The research project is a requirement for students undertaking Masters programme at the University of Nairobi, whose results will inform policy and learning.

Any assistance given to him to facilitate data collection for his research project will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



Professor Maria Nzomo,
Director, IDIS
&
Professor of International Relations and Governance

5. Do you think sports is a key cultural component that can be useful in advancing Kenya's national interests?

Yes []

No []

Please explain

6. Which sports do you think has played a crucial role in advancing Kenya's national interests?

a) Football [] b) Athletics [] c) Rugby [] d) Volleyball []

Please explain

7. Do you think Kenya can effectively use sports to promote its national interest?

Yes []

No []

Please explain

8. In your opinion, is Kenya effectively using culture as a soft power strategy in advancing its national interests?

Yes []

No []

9. What are the challenges of using culture as a soft power strategy in pursuit of Kenya's national interests?

10. Do you have any recent example of how Kenya has used culture as a strategy in advancing its interests?

Yes []

No []

Please explain

11. Does your office/institution utilize cultural diplomacy in its operations?

Please explain

12. What is your opinion on what should be done to improve the results of culture as a strategy used in pursuit of Kenya's key national interests?

Appendix III: Research Permit

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Appendix IV: Plagiarism Report

THE ROLE OF CULTURE AS A SOFT POWER STRATEGY IN THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL INTERESTS AMONG AFRICAN STATES: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA

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